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17 AUGUST 2025
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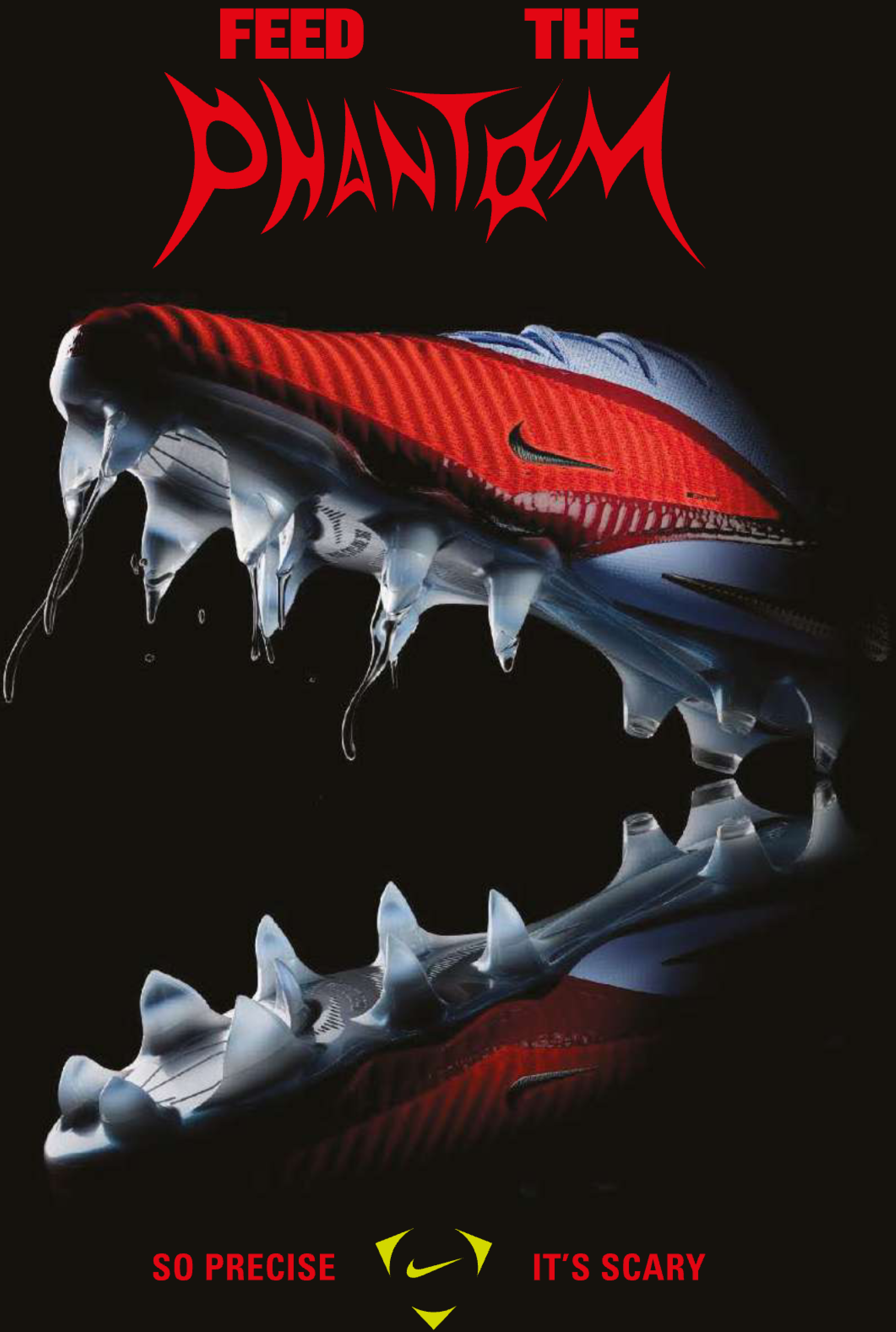
VS CRYSTAL PALACE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ENZO MARESCA

HEAD COACH

It's exciting to be back at Stamford Bridge, starting another Premier League season after a great few months for the club.

It was fantastic to come here last week so we could celebrate our success in the FIFA Club World Cup and UEFA Conference League with our fans and prepare for this season with two good games against tough opponents. It has been a different pre-season this year, and I'm really pleased with how we have adapted to the change in our usual summer schedule as a club. We have taken on an exciting new challenge, won a major trophy, and returned to London with two high-level friendly games.

We were happy with our performances last week and also happy to be home again, as world champions. It was an opportunity for our new players to perform at Stamford Bridge and for our fans to see how we are preparing as a squad. I think overall we can take a lot of positives from it and we approach the new season with confidence and determination.

Now everything starts again and we are only thinking about the task ahead of us. We finished last season very well, and we want to continue to improve as we start the 2025/26 campaign. There is a lot to look forward to, as we return to the Champions League this season as well, and we will do our best in every competition. But we will take each game as it comes.

We welcome Oliver Glasner and his Crystal Palace team to Stamford Bridge today and congratulate them for their success in the Community Shield last weekend. It will be a tough first match, against the FA Cup holders, but this is why the Premier League is so special – because there are so many good teams, so many different challenges, and we look forward to each of them. We drew both our games against Crystal Palace last season and we know we will have to be fully focused on what we have to do from the first whistle to the last if we want to take the three points today.

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REECE JAMES

CAPTAIN

Welcome back, everyone, to Stamford Bridge for the start of the Premier League season.

There's a really good feeling at this club right now. We've had a great summer, after ending last season with the Conference League trophy and now we start 2025/26 as world champions, which is a great thing to be able to write!

It was great to be back here last weekend for our final pre-season games and you could sense the positivity around the place. There was a great atmosphere and we were really happy with our performances too. We've made some brilliant additions to the squad this summer, giving us even more options across the pitch, and you could see what they offer in the friendlies against Leverkusen and AC Milan.

Now we have to replicate that in competitive fixtures and we can't wait to get started today against Crystal Palace, who come here off the back of winning the Community Shield last week, and as FA Cup winners from last season.

It should be a really good game and we can't wait to get started. It's also the first of four London derbies in a row to kick off the Premier League campaign, with West Ham away on Friday night and then games against Fulham and Brentford after that, so we know how much these matches are going to mean to our supporters.

I want to say a big thank you to all of you for your backing last season and over the summer. It was great to see so many of you in America for the Club World Cup and here at the Bridge for both games last weekend. You're always behind us and that gives us even more belief that we can achieve big things together.

We came through some difficult moments last season to finish strong and put this club back where it deserves to be, winning silverware and taking on the best in the world. Now we want to push on again and make sure we're up there in the top spots in the Premier League. Most importantly, we have to make sure we start well, so all our focus for now is on today's game and Palace.

Captain
24
CFC
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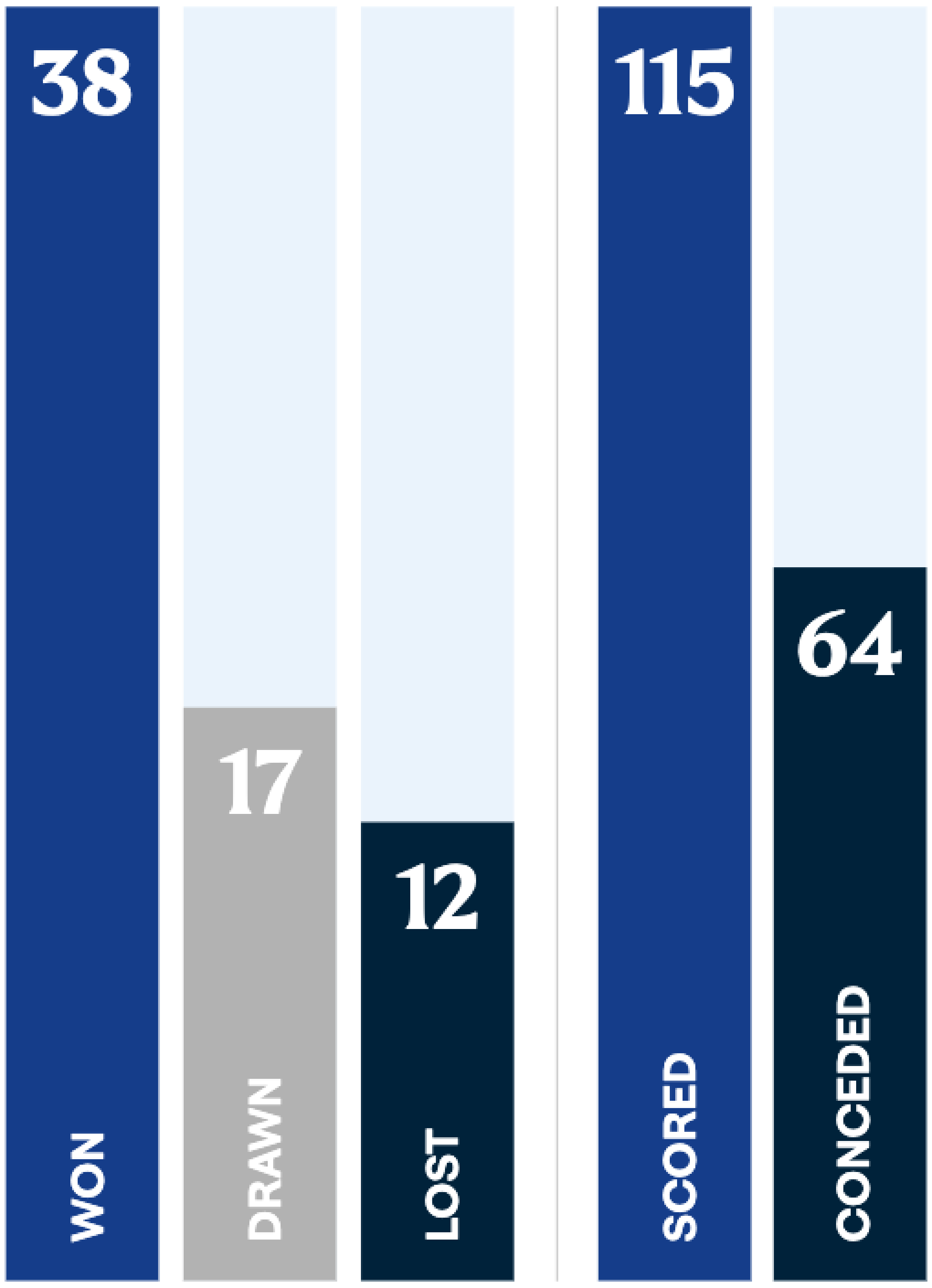
The Blues have enjoyed bragging rights more often than not in this London derby over the years, particularly in recent times as we put together a 13-match winning run against the Eagles prior to last season's draw at the Bridge

HEAD-TO-HEAD



COMPLETE RECORD

	Pld	W	D	L	F	A
League (h)	28	16	9	3	52	24
League (a)	28	16	7	5	43	22
FA Cup	7	3	1	3	14	15
League Cup	1	0	0	1	1	3
Full Members Cup	3	3	0	0	5	0

Marcos Alonso celebrates after scoring our first goal in a 3-0 win over Crystal Palace on the opening day of the 2021/22 Premier League season

DID YOU KNOW?

The first match between Chelsea and Crystal Palace was in the same year that both clubs were founded, in 1905. We met in the third preliminary round of the FA Cup – but the Blues also had a league game against Burnley at Stamford Bridge on the same day, which we won 1-0. We sent a weakened team to play the Eagles and were beaten 7-1.

LEAGUE DOUBLES

Chelsea (10) 1971/72, 1997/98, 2004/05, 2014/15, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24

Crystal Palace None

Chelsea's all-time top scorer in this fixture is Peter Osgood (8).

MILESTONE MATCHES

First league meeting
Chelsea 2-2 Crystal Palace, 1924/25, Division Two

Biggest CFC league win
Chelsea 6-2 Crystal Palace, 1997/98, Premier League

Biggest CPFC league win
Crystal Palace 2-0 Chelsea, 1972/73, Division One

Biggest crowd at the Bridge
55,074 (Chelsea 2-0 Crystal Palace), 1970/71, FA Cup

Tulip
Commodore

Graham Stuart was the first Chelsea player to score in a Premier League fixture between the sides, netting our second in a 3-1 win in 1992/93 after a Richard Shaw own goal.

DID YOU KNOW?

Chelsea are unbeaten in our last 15 league matches against Crystal Palace (13 wins, two draws), our longest ongoing run against any current Premier League side.

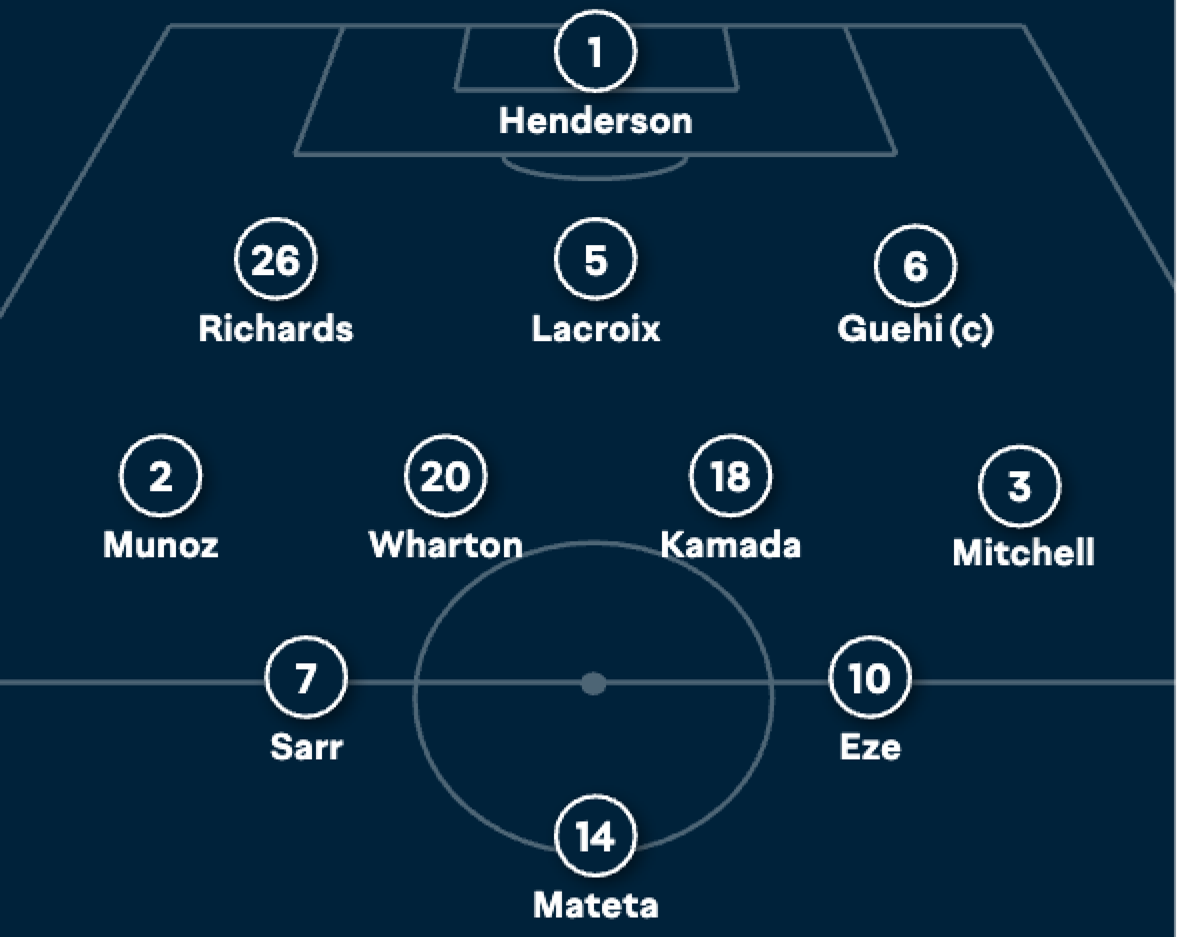
RECENT MEETINGS

	Premier League		FA Cup
Season	**Home**	**Away**	
2020/21	W 4-0	W 4-1	
2021/22	W 3-0	W 1-0	W 2-0 (SF, Wembley)
2022/23	W 1-0	W 2-1	
2023/24	W 2-1	W 3-1	
2024/25	D 1-1	D 1-1	

Conor Gallagher's brace helped us to a 3-1 triumph at Selhurst Park in February 2024, which was our most recent victory against the Eagles

Founded 1905
Nickname The Eagles
Stadium Selhurst Park
PL 2024/25 12th
Best PL 10th (14/15, 23/24)

LAST LINE-UP (3-4-2-1)



vs LIVERPOOL COMMUNITY SHIELD 10.08.25

PRE-SEASON RESULTS

Date	Opposition	Result
12.07.25	Millwall (h)	W 1-0
25.07.25	Crawley Town (a)	W 3-0
29.07.25	Mainz (n)*	D 1-1, L 2-3
01.08.25	Augsburg (n)*	W 3-1, L 0-1
10.08.25	Liverpool (n, CS)	D 2-2**

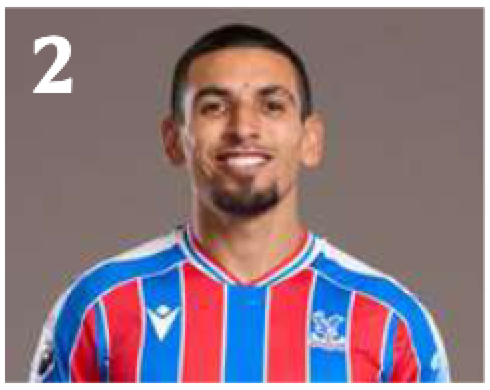
** two matches played on the same day*
*** Crystal Palace won 3-2 on pens*

DEAN HENDERSON

Position Goalkeeper
Age 28
Nationality English
Last club Manchester United
Premier League apps/c sheets
2024/25 38/11 **All-time** 123/38

WALTER BENITEZ

Position Goalkeeper
Age 32
Nationality Argentinian
Last club PSV
Premier League apps/c sheets
2024/25 0/0 **All-time** 0/0

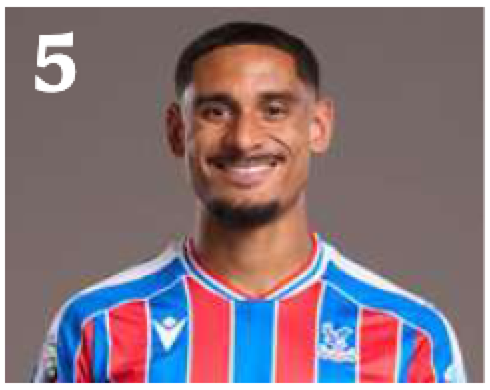


DANIEL MUNOZ

Position Defender
Age 29
Nationality Colombian
Last club Genk
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 37/4 **All-time** 53/4

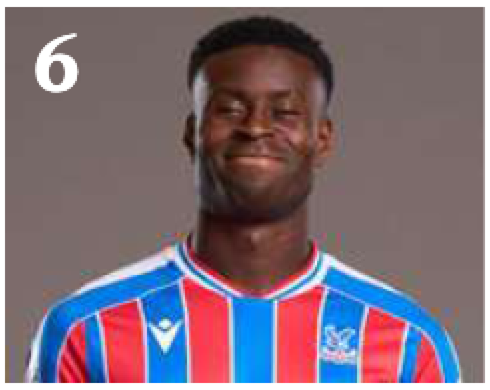
TYRICK MITCHELL

Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality English
Source Crystal Palace
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 37/0 **All-time** 169/3



MAXENCE LACROIX

Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality French
Last club VfL Wolfsburg
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 35/1 **All-time** 35/1

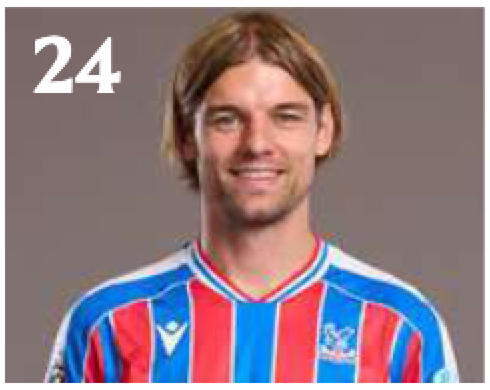


MARC GUEHI

Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality English
Last club Chelsea
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 34/3 **All-time** 132/6

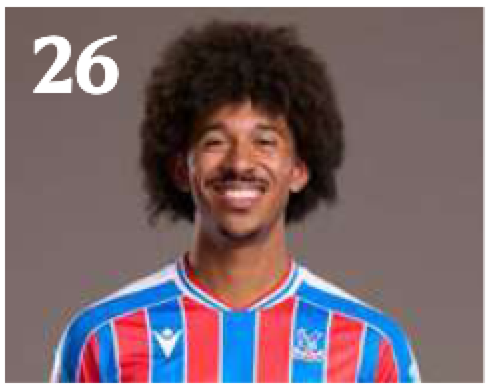
NATHANIEL CLYNE

Position Defender
Age 34
Nationality English
Last club Liverpool
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 13/0 **All-time** 268/4

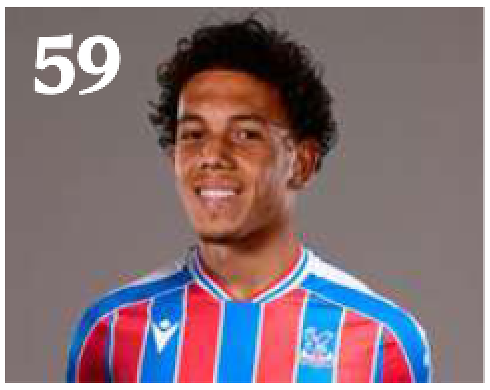


BORNA SOSA

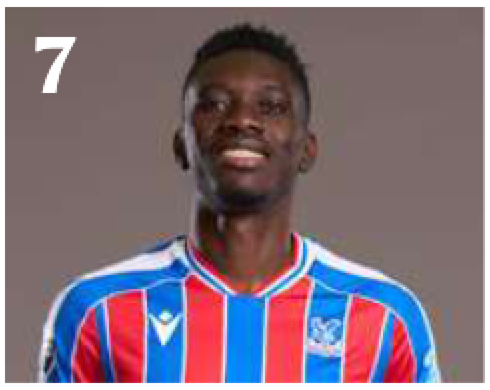
Position Defender
Age 27
Nationality Croatian
Last club Ajax
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 0/0 **All-time** 0/0



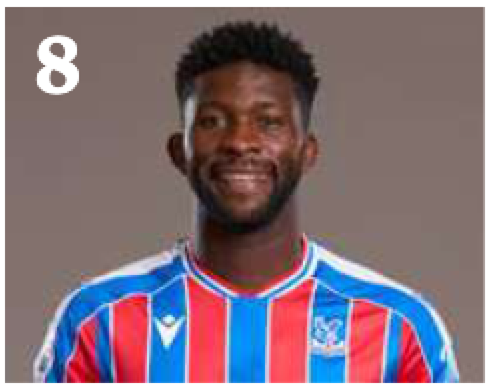
CHRIS RICHARDS
Position Defender
Age 25
Nationality American
Last club Bayern Munich
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 24/1 All-time 59/2



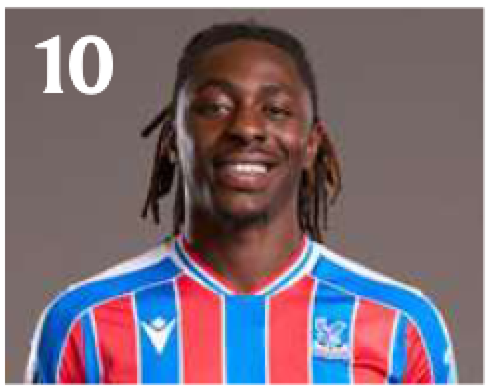
RIO CARDINES
Position Defender
Age 19
Nationality Trinidadian and Tobagonian
Source Crystal Palace
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 0/0 All-time 0/0



ISMAILA SARR
Position Midfielder
Age 27
Nationality Senegalese
Last club Marseille
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 38/8 All-time 88/18



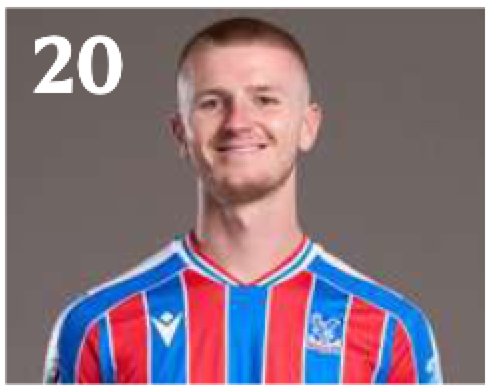
JEFFERSON LERMA
Position Midfielder
Age 30
Nationality Colombian
Last club Bournemouth
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 33/0 All-time 161/9



EBERECHI EZE
Position Midfielder
Age 27
Nationality English
Last club Queens Park Rangers
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 34/8 All-time 146/34

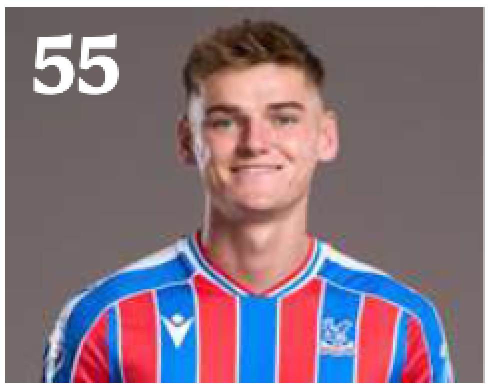
DAICHI KAMADA
Position Midfielder
Age 29
Nationality Japanese
Last club Lazio
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 34/0 All-time 34/0

WILL HUGHES
Position Midfielder
Age 30
Nationality English
Last club Watford
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 33/0 All-time 183/6

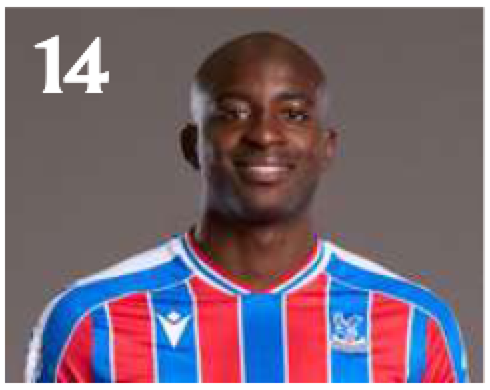


ADAM WHARTON
Position Midfielder
Age 21
Nationality English
Last club Blackburn Rovers
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 20/0 All-time 36/0

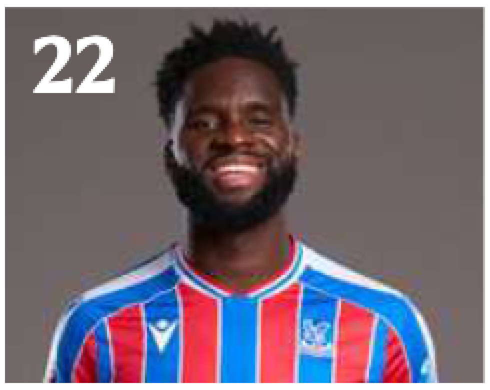
ROMAIN ESSE
Position Midfielder
Age 20
Nationality English
Last club Millwall
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 7/1 All-time 7/1



JUSTIN DEVENNY
Position Midfielder
Age 21
Nationality Northern Irish
Last club Airdrieonians
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 23/1 All-time 23/1



JEAN-PHILIPPE MATETA
Position Forward
Age 28
Nationality French
Last club Mainz 05
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 37/14 All-time 130/38



ODSONNE EDOUARD
Position Forward
Age 27
Nationality French
Last club Celtic
Premier League apps/gls
2024/25 6/0 All-time 99/18

OLIVER GLASNER
Age 50
Nationality Austrian
Last club Eintracht Frankfurt
Appointed February 2024

RECORD vs CHELSEA
WON 0 DRAWN 2 LOST 0

CLUB WORLD CUP
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FIFA

CENTRE FIREWORKS

Stamford Bridge has always welcomed strikers that combine technique with tenacity, who can mix it with the toughest centre-backs and still find room to bring a bit of flair to proceedings. We caught up with new boy Liam Delap, who is ready for action after a whirlwind summer

INTERVIEW • DOMINIC BLISS

Liam Delap couldn't have timed his move to Chelsea better. No sooner had he showed up at Cobham to meet his new team-mates and take a look around the building than he was reporting for a flight to America to play in the new-look FIFA Club World Cup. A month later, he was a world champion.

Another month on, and we're sat in an empty TV studio at the training ground, with a panoramic view of the pitches behind us, and Delap is all smiles as he reflects on his whirlwind introduction to life here.

"Obviously it's super exciting," he says. "I came here to play big games, so to go straight into a tournament like that was a really good feeling. I was just excited to get started with this club.

"It's probably the perfect way to settle into a group because you're spending a long period of time with everyone. We didn't really know what it would be like, but in the end it was massive.

"That sense of accomplishment, that we've done it. Everyone's worked so hard towards a goal and then to finally be able to just lift it and you have that feeling of… you know… it's ours."

Delap seems to be at home already and he's had a little help settling in from all the familiar faces around the place. As a youngster at Manchester City, he was in the academy with Cole Palmer and Romeo Lavia, with each of them born a year or so apart – Palmer is 23, Delap is 22 and Lavia is 21. They all came together in the same Under-21s team in the 2020/21 season, when their manager was Enzo Maresca, and they ended up winning the Premier League 2 title, in no small part due to 24 goals from the division's top scorer, Delap.

"Obviously, when you're settling into a new place, it's nice to know people and faces," he says. "We had an incredible season that year when he was manager, and then he was one of the [first-team] coaches at City under Pep for a few years, so I spent a lot of time with him there as well. Obviously he's gone on to do really good things and when he spoke to me about coming here, I was really happy.

"He's kept the same principles, just changed a few little things, but he's still the same guy that he was back then.

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"I think the way we set up there at City, Cole was playing just in behind me and the more you play with someone, the more you learn about them. Then Romeo came in from Belgium and he settled in so well. You could see how good of a player he was from the moment he came in. Obviously to see him here now as well… it's impressive what he's done."

Delap joined Manchester City towards the end of his academy days, having previously been at Derby County, where his dad, Rory, was once a thorn in Chelsea's side, scoring a late brace to give the Rams a 3-1 win against Gianluca Vialli's Blues at Pride Park in October 1999. Another goal for Stoke City looked to have sunk Chelsea again at the Bridge in January 2009, but on that occasion Rory's efforts were superseded by two goals in the last three minutes, with Juliano Belletti and Frank Lampard the last-gasp heroes.

> “
> IT WAS PROBABLY THE PERFECT WAY TO SETTLE INTO A GROUP BECAUSE YOU'RE SPENDING A LONG PERIOD OF TIME WITH EVERYONE

Liam was a little lad of five at the time of the later of those two games, and he is quick to acknowledge the part played by Rory in his development as a young footballer.

"I grew up watching him," he says, "and he did incredible things. He's been able to help me, and it's nice to have someone to look up to. If I ever need any advice, I can ask him."

The Chelsea players of that era are foremost in Delap's mind when I ask him how he viewed his new club when he was growing up.

"I think of important players like Drogba, Lampard, John Terry, Diego Costa – people like that. They stand out and are leaders who have had such an impact on the club. It's one of the most historic teams in the world and they win so many things. The legends here at the club are players that as a kid you could admire so there was so much to take from that. It's just a massive club in history so you're always going to take notice of it.

"I've just seen John Terry before this interview," he adds, having bumped into our former captain while he was at Cobham to work with our Academy players. "It was the first time I've properly met him, but he seems like such a nice guy. He had 20-plus years in the Prem, so if there's anyone that you can go and ask for advice on how it works in this league, then he's probably one!"

Well, he knows what centre-backs don't like, I suggest.

"Exactly!"

In fairness, Delap seems to have worked that out pretty well himself. He is a defender's nightmare – tall, strong and imposing. He is versatile too, perfectly comfortable running the channels and firing shots across the goalkeeper, or playing closer to the centre-half, backing in and holding the ball up before laying it off to a team-mate or spinning and shooting. All action, as much centre-fireworks as centre-forward.

He showcased all of his attributes as he scored his first Chelsea goal, against ES Tunis in the group stage of the Club

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World Cup. First, he was alive to a beautiful chipped pass from Enzo Fernandez, and with his back to the right-back, he rolled him and brought the ball down on his thigh in one fluid motion. From there, it was frightening for the Tunis backline, as Delap had the ball at his feet and bore down on their goal, chopping inside the big centre-back before stroking it past the wrong-footed keeper. You couldn't have asked for a better sample of his abilities.

What's more, you could see all of his footballing experiences to this point somewhere along the line – outmuscling the defender, as he would have needed to during his loan spells in the Championship with Stoke, Preston and Hull; the touch and finesse learned in a Premier League academy; the confident finish of a man who hit double figures for a struggling Ipswich Town side in the top flight last season.

"Yeah, 100 per cent," he says when asked about the cumulative effect of playing in all those contrasting environments. "I think that's probably one of the most important things for me. When I was growing up and getting that experience, I took so many different things from different teams and it was just about adapting to what suits each game and what suits which team. So definitely that adaptability has helped me.

"I think you're required to play differently against different opposition," he adds, "but you've always got to switch up your game, even in-game, to try and get the best advantage you can."

Last season certainly felt like a breakthrough year for Delap as he found his feet in the Premier League while his side were embroiled in a relegation battle. His form in front of goal kept Ipswich in the fight for much of the campaign, and it can only have helped his career prospects that he delivered one of his stand-out performances in a 2-0 win over Chelsea in late December.

"Yeah, definitely!" he smiles. "I wanted to play at that highest level and just keep learning and building as a player, and I got the chance to do that last season. They really helped me at Ipswich and I thoroughly enjoyed the season – I thought that I improved a lot."

He ended 2024/25 with 14 Premier League goal involvements (12 goals, two assists) and a nomination for the PFA Young Player of the Year award, the winner of which will be announced on Tuesday night.

Delap takes it all in his stride, though – there isn't even a hint that he's getting carried away, and he seems more keen to kick on as a Chelsea player in the Premier League than basking in the glory of our summer in the States. He has made the move here, scored his first Chelsea goal and got his hands on silverware. Now he just wants to get going again, to get out there and do it.

"I think that's the most important thing in football for me – that I just love playing," he says. "I think my family have raised me well and I've had good people around me. It's all about football and I just like playing.

"It's such an exciting season for me, coming into this team, especially after winning the Club World Cup. We've got so much confidence and belief that we can do really great things this season and hopefully we can continue to win trophies at this club."

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JOEY JONES: 1955–2025

All at Chelsea Football Club were greatly saddened by the passing of Joey Jones on 22 July, at the age of 70.

The former Blues left-back was hugely popular with the supporters during a three-season stay at Stamford Bridge between 1982 and 1985, during which time we avoided relegation to the third tier, before earning promotion back to the top flight. He was voted the club's Player of the Year by the fans in the first of those campaigns, while the latter achievement earned him a Second Division winner's medal to add to the enviable collection he had built up during three years with Liverpool in the mid-late 1970s.

Between leaving Anfield and arriving on the Fulham Road, he spent four seasons with hometown club, Wrexham, where he had started his football journey and would go on to have a third spell at the end of his career.

Jones joined Chelsea under the management of John Neal, who had coached him as a youngster at Wrexham. A wholehearted defender, he was described by former chairman Brian Mears as "the crowd on the pitch", but he made an inauspicious start to his Blues career when he was sent off on his debut against Carlisle United.

"That obviously didn't help," he said, looking back on his time here in later life. "But then after a few months they realised I would always have a go and they thought, 'This fella's one of us.' I think the moment came against Bolton at Stamford Bridge. I dived into a ruck of players to head the ball clear, but I should never have been that low because I ended up getting my head split open. I just got up and carried on, and things changed from that moment. My name was chanted whenever I took a throw-in. I responded with the clenched fist."

That clenched fist to the crowd became his symbol as he grew into a cult hero on the terraces at the Bridge, alongside his great mate from Wrexham, Mickey Thomas. But he always kept his feet firmly on the ground.

"I knew my limitations, but managers wanted me to play for their team and whoever I played for, I always gave my all. Good, bad or indifferent, I couldn't change. I always recognised the fans because it's a supporters' game anyway – they spend all their money getting behind the team all over the country."

Jones was capped 72 times by Wales and was loved by the supporters everywhere he played. At Chelsea, he will be remembered as the man who put his shoulder to the wheel in 91 appearances for the club, having arrived during troubled times and helped to turn our fortunes around. More than that, he'll be recalled as one of the great characters in our history.

Our thoughts and condolences are with Joey's loved ones at this difficult time.

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IN FOCUS

REECE JAMES

Our captain's reaction to getting his hands on the new-look FIFA Club World Cup in New Jersey last month told you everything you need to know about the depth of feeling he has for Chelsea Football Club.

"This is what I've dreamt of my entire life," he said. "From a little boy, lifting trophies for this club was my dream."

Reece James is one of our own and in the second half of last season he showed once again why he is considered one of England's top talents after enduring a torrid couple of years with injury.

Whether playing right-back – in various interpretations of the role – or as a central midfielder – as he did in the Club World Cup final win over PSG – the 25-year-old was influential in both halves of the field from the moment he came off the bench to score a scorching last-minute free-kick and rescue a vital point at home to Bournemouth in January.

He repeated the set-piece trick in America this summer with a bamboozler from wide on the left that left the Benfica defence and goalkeeper stunned in the Round of 16 at the Club World Cup.

This season is James' third as skipper and, after lifting two trophies this year, you can be sure that he's got the taste for silverware back again.

OVER LAND AND SEA

WORDS • DOMINIC BLISS

Football is the global game – and the story of Chelsea Football Club has had chapters written all over the world. To kick off this series, we're heading to South America to explore our Argentinian links

Towards the end of last season, Enzo Fernandez became the first Argentinian player to reach 100 appearances for Chelsea.

Enzo has become a central figure in this Blues generation, not just in the sense that he plays in the middle of the pitch, but that so much of our play goes through him, and so many crucial goals owe much to his endeavour in the opposition half.

The 2022 World Cup winner matches steel and silk in the way that we have come to associate with so many greats from his nation and, although you can count the number of Argentinians to play for Chelsea on your fingers, our history with the land at the southern tip of South America goes way back.

Argentina was the first nation outside of Europe where Chelsea played a game, at the beginning of our historic South American tour in May 1929.

David Calderhead's fairly unremarkable Blues side, fresh from finishing ninth in Division Two, travelled across the Atlantic by boat and played a series of friendlies in three countries. There were a couple of games each in Uruguay and Brazil, but the vast majority of the match action took place in Argentina, giving it a special place in our history.

However, despite our cosmopolitan transfer policy of the late 1990s, it took until 2003 for us to field an Argentinian player, and when we did it was one of the most famous of all the Albiceleste superstars of the era: Juan Sebastian Veron.

A majestic midfield playmaker, Veron had glided over the pitches of Serie A during his time with Sampdoria, Parma and Lazio, spraying passes around with effortless grace and generally seeing the game from a different plain to everyone around him. He was a tall, physically imposing figure too, and yet he hadn't set the world alight during two seasons with Manchester United between 2001 and 2003, although he had become a Premier League champion in that time.

Still, his reputation was largely intact after a period of adaptation to English football, so hopes were high that this statement signing could help to guide Chelsea from Premier League nearly men to champions for the first time since 1955.

It didn't work out that way, however, as a combination of fitness and form issues prevented him from building up any momentum in west London. We saw glimpses of brilliance – not least when he scored our first Premier League goal of the season in a 2-1 win at Anfield – but the permanent presence of a bandage below his knee reminded us that he was prone to setbacks. Perhaps his best moment for us also took place in Italy, when he and fellow Argentinian,

J.COLE
10
VERON
20

Joe Cole, Claudio Ranieri and Juan Sebastian Veron

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> “RANIERI PROMISED ME THE NUMBER 10 SHIRT, AND AT THE LAST MINUTE SOMEONE HAD PROMISED IT TO VERON Joe Cole

Hernan Crespo, combined to shock their former club, Lazio, during a 4-0 Champions League win in Rome.

Yet, Veron’s lasting impact at Stamford Bridge was an indirect one. His fame and the waves made by his transfer served to inspire a pair of young English midfielders to up their game, to meet the challenge of competing for a place in the team with a player of his calibre.

“I had to stand up then,” Frank Lampard said years later, reflecting on his state of mind in the summer of 2003, “playing with the big players who came in – whether or not they were successful – players like Veron, [Claude] Makelele and all the big names.”

Joe Cole, who signed on the same day as Veron, literally had to fight for his shirt after he was handed the No10 jersey hours before the Argentine midfielder put pen to paper and immediately requested the same squad number.

“Claudio [Ranieri] promised me the number 10 shirt,” recalled Cole, “and at the last minute, someone had promised it to Veron. My dad said, ‘No, you’re not signing for a club that lies to you on the first day,’ and everyone got a bit panicky. I got the most panicky, I thought it was going to mess the deal up. But someone rang Claudio, he rang Seba, and Seba was okay – it didn’t bother him.

“I would have signed for the [number] 20, but in the long run I think it’s right – you want to start off on the right foot. It was all just a bit of a last-minute melee… but it all worked out in the end, and we both signed.”

Veron was followed through the door later that summer by his compatriot and fellow Serie A superstar, Crespo, who remains Chelsea’s highest-scoring Argentinian to date with 24 goals, although Enzo is not too far behind with 16 to his name from midfield.

Those goals were spread over two seasons, separated by a loan spell with AC Milan in 2004/05, in which he reached the Champions League final, but he never fully settled in London. Crespo’s time here deserves reassessing though, as he scored some vital goals – and some brilliant ones – not least his late, late winner at Wigan Athletic on the opening day of the 2005/06 campaign that triggered the first refrain of ‘That’s why we’re champions’ – the chant that would characterise that season.

He has since reflected on his time here in sentimental fashion, expressing his desire to have spent longer with Chelsea, and the chants of, “’Ello, Hernan Crespo, Hernan Crespo, ’ello!” rang around Stamford Bridge as he completed the end-of-season lap of honour in tears after winning the Premier League with us in April 2006. He had missed the first title the previous year due to his loan move, and knew he was departing that summer – the poignancy of the moment wasn’t lost on player or supporters and left him close to our hearts.

But his part in this story doesn’t end there. In 2020, while coaching overachieving Argentinian club Defensa y Justicia, Crespo took a teenage Enzo Fernandez on

Hernan Crespo and Enzo Fernandez

Juan Sebastian Veron

Hernan Crespo

50 YEARS OF SUPPORTING CHELSEA FC

DEAN HUMPHREYS A TRUE BLUE

Dean Humphreys, Head of the Chelsea FC Deaf Supporters Group, is a lifelong Chelsea fan and has been attending matches since 1975.

Over the course of the last 50 years, he has sat in all four stands at the Bridge and has travelled to countless away fixtures, both domestically and internationally.

Dean's love of football started when he attended matches with his father and uncle, before he then jumped into playing deaf football for several clubs. He progressed to represent Great Britan and won a Deaflympics gold medal at Melbourne, Australia in 2005.

Now, in his role as Head of the Chelsea FC Deaf Supporters Group, he is helping Cadbury shape a club first that will see BSL interpreters integrated at all men's and women's home fixtures in 25/26.

Cadbury sat down with Dean to learn more about his game changing work for the Chelsea Deaf Fan Community.

How was the Chelsea FC Deaf Supporters Group founded?

"Peter Hawes and I created the Chelsea FC Deaf Supporters Group during COVID. Now we have over 45 members situated all over the UK. As a collective we could talk forever about Chelsea FC and its history.

"We have a broad range of members, and most of our discussion takes place on our WhatsApp group, where we can circulate content that supports both English and BSL language. It is non-stop Chelsea and the material, and banter is rich!"

Dean Humphreys (pictured right) alongside club legend Tommy Langley, enjoying pre-match build up at Stamford Bridge.

What are the challenges that you face in attending match days?

"Ensuring I can get a seat where I can see the full stadium environment is important. My eyes are vital given my profound deafness. It can also feel quite isolating at times. Even though I miss out on all the sounds and singing (I howl instead of sing!) I try and enjoy the vibrant feeling and camaraderie among the fans."

What does it mean to see the integration of BSL interpreters at matchdays?

"It is a wonderful step towards helping our passionate fan community feel equal alongside our hearing peers as well as other disabled fans."

What advice would you give to deaf fans who are attending their first fixture?

"It can feel quite overwhelming the first time round. Despite being in the stands with thousands it's easy to feel as if you're one in a crowd. I try to embrace the energy that being at the Bridge gives you."

What can fans do, to help support the group?

"It is hard to bond with hearing fans. We would love hearing fans to engage with deaf fans. Learning some simple BSL phrases would make a huge difference to our match day experience."

What would you like this season's Sign with Fingers campaign to achieve?

"BSL is a powerful visual language, so having Chelsea supporters adopt BSL at matches would be incredible to see."

Get Involved - Learn BSL Today

Scan the QR code to explore the Cadbury Sign with Fingers Hub and learn some football-friendly BSL signs.

Aaron Anselmino

Enzo Fernandez

> “WE KNOW WHAT HERNAN WAS LIKE AS A PLAYER, BUT AS A PERSON HE’S A TOP GUY, HE ALWAYS TRIES TO HELP, ALWAYS GIVES ADVICE
>
> Enzo Fernandez

loan from River Plate to boost his team for a campaign in the Copa Sudamericana, which is the South American equivalent of the Europa League. It turned out to be a great move for both men, as they won the competition – Crespo’s first trophy as a coach and Enzo’s first winner’s medal as a senior player.

“That was a unique experience,” Enzo said of his time playing under the former Chelsea striker. “He’s a very special person. We already know what Hernan was like as a player, he has proved it over the years, but even as a person he’s a top guy, he always tries to help, always gives advice. He always has stories to tell and whenever I needed him, he was always there. He has taught me a lot on the field.”

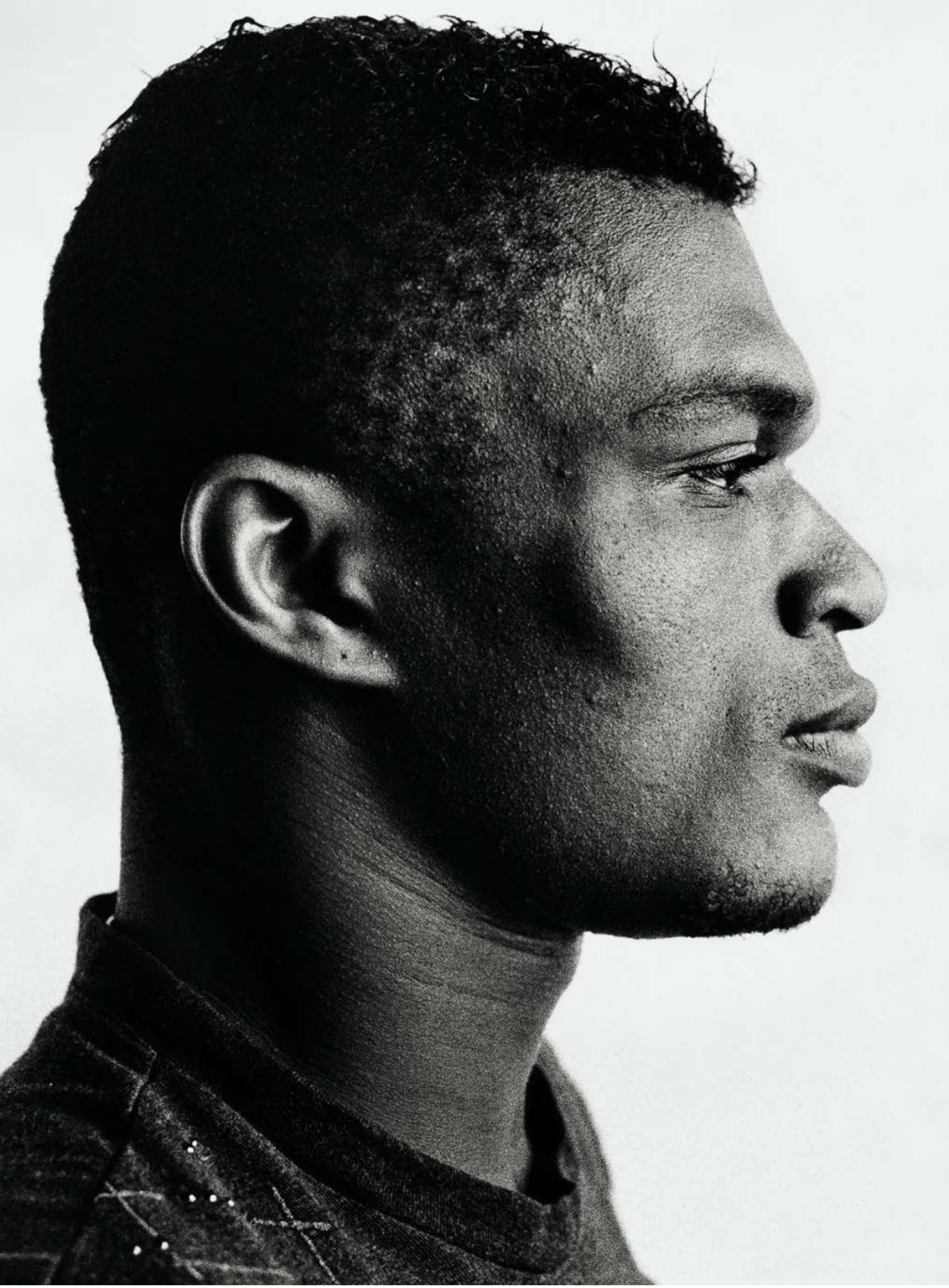
Enzo returned to River Plate full of confidence and won the league title with his boyhood club, sparking his rapid ascent to the pinnacle of the game as he went on to lift the World Cup and become a key player for Chelsea.

These days, Enzo can look to the coaching staff at Cobham and find another former Argentina international who won major silverware with Chelsea, in the shape of assistant coach, Willy Caballero.

The goalkeeper won the Champions League, the FA Cup and the Europa League here between 2017 and 2021, during which time he also briefly played alongside another star from his homeland, Gonzalo Higuain, who spent the second half of 2018/19 here on loan, scoring five goals and winning the Europa League. A decade earlier, Franco Di Santo, a young striker from the Mendoza region of Argentina famed for its red wine, made 16 appearances for the club between 2008 and 2009, before moving on to Wigan – where he won the FA Cup – and then a host of clubs across Europe and South America.

The latest Argentinian to make his Chelsea debut is Aaron Anselmino, who came off the bench in our FIFA Club World Cup Round of 16 victory over Benfica in Charlotte this summer. The former Boca Juniors centre-back arrived at Stamford Bridge last season and, at 20 years old, has a long time ahead of him to make an impression in the game.

In four years’ time, 100 years will have passed since an intrepid Chelsea squad set foot in Argentina for a series of exhibition games that helped to open English eyes to the fierce energy and technical audacity of South American football. A century later, an Argentinian World Cup-winner operates at the heart of a Chelsea midfield that embodies those very attributes.



BUILDING A WINNING MENTALITY

Signing Marcel Desailly in 1998 was a statement of intent by a Chelsea side who had become serious contenders for major honours. Speaking exclusively to the matchday programme, the French World Cup winner tells us how he recovered from a baptism of fire to become a legendary Blues skipper

WORDS • DOMINIC BLISS

"I had to face the reality of the Premier League, the fighting spirit."

Marcel Desailly still remembers his Chelsea debut vividly, 27 years later. He had arrived in England as a World Cup winner, a Champions League winner, a world-class player who had bestrode European football, first with Marseille and then as part of a dominant AC Milan side in the mid-1990s. A centre-back in his early days, the France international had recreated himself as a midfield demolition man in Italy – he was even depicted volleying a wrecking ball through a wall in an advert for his preferred football boots.

At Chelsea, he was set to revert to his original role at the heart of the defence, alongside his compatriot, Frank Leboeuf. Rarely has a central defensive partnership been so eagerly anticipated at the start of a season, and yet when the curtain rose on the 1998/99 Premier League campaign, the indomitable Desailly found himself enduring the archetypal welcome to English football.

"For the first match I came to Coventry and a smaller stadium," he recalls, "where I didn't know too much about the quality of the opponent – which was Dion Dublin. At the time, with the crowd very close to the players, it was something different – another world, another world – coming from San Siro. Oh, it was very, very difficult because I came full of confidence. I was coming from AC Milan, I was a World Cup winner."

Dublin put the hammer down on his marker that August afternoon at Highfield Road, battling and bruising, all limbs as he rose first to each cross, flicking the ball on to his pacey strike partner, Darren Huckerby.

The home fans chanted "Eng-er-land, Eng-er-land, Eng-er-land!" as Gianluca Vialli's cosmopolitan Blues toiled in the face of an old-fashioned barrage of balls into the box. We fell to a 2-1 defeat and the media narrative was clear. "Glamour boys fall to scrap dealers," was the headline in the *Independent* the next morning.

But Vialli's mantra was "You win or you learn" and his new signing bore those words out in the weeks, months and seasons that followed. Desailly took notes that day, and went on to become a towering figure in a team that went 21 league games unbeaten following that opening day

OWN THE SHIRT WORN ON THE PITCH
GO TO MATCHWORNSHIRT
PALM
DELA
JAMES
24
CHALOBAH
23
SCAN TO KNOW MORE
CHELSEA FOOTBALL CLUB
MWS
MATCHWORNSHIRT

Back at San Siro in the autumn of 1999 and pitting his wits against Andriy Shevchenko and AC Milan

humbling at Coventry. He was the basis of a new way of defending – solid, yes, but smart and technically gifted too. He was nicknamed *The Rock*, but there was a cleanness to his work that made his defending incredibly watchable.

"Anticipation, yeah," he says, when this is put to him. "Anticipation of the pass to your opponents. Yeah, that was probably one of my strengths, my capabilities.

"Even though I was 29, 30 years old, I really wanted to face that challenge and the pride of being a defender. I'd been so frustrated in the years before I reached England where as a midfielder you don't feel the reward when you grab the ball from the opponent or a nice clean tackle. So this was important for me to experience in England, where you get rewarded for the nice tackle.

"It was a good era where strikers were in numbers, the diversity was quite high on how you had to position yourself and, again, the intensity of the match every time.

"But the key thing for us Chelsea players – for that generation, I mean – was that we built a foundation of possession. We were having the possession. Only Graeme Le Saux, when he was getting the ball on the left side, was tempted to kick the ball as a typical English player, which was okay for us. But yes, we started with the possession because you had [Gustavo] Poyet, you had Dan Petrescu, you had Gianfranco Zola, the magician. We're really proud that we suddenly started to bring something different, building the winning mentality at Chelsea through possession and not through the typical English way of playing."

In Desailly's first season here, Chelsea only lost three games – the same as champions Manchester United – but we drew too many and finished four points behind Sir Alex Ferguson's side, with Arsenal sandwiched between us.

"Unfortunately it took time," says Desailly, who now works as a TV pundit for beIN Sports and as an ambassador for various organisations. "We were in a position where, at home, we were really capable of winning and taking the match on. But away, with the type of possession that we were trying to have… impossible.

"We lost so many points away, because we were a different type of player, you see. So we had a problem. We didn't really know how to play counter-attack, compared to Manchester United and Arsenal, who were set up to match the reality of English football at that time. We were a bit ahead of the time."

It's a point worth dwelling on for a moment. While United and Arsenal played the kind of high-tempo counter-attacking game that characterised English football at the turn of the century, Chelsea's managers craved control and possession – a style of play more associated with the Premier League in the 2020s. "Don't throw the ball away," is the phrase Desailly associates with his time here, first under Vialli and then Claudio Ranieri.

However, towards the end of his time here he began to see a different Chelsea emerging, one that was ready to challenge for the title more seriously.

"In 2004, if Arsenal did not do the invincible season, we were going to win it, " he says, "because the quality of the players was very high, with Veron, Crespo, Makelele, Geremi… John Terry was starting to be at his peak, Lampard was also at his peak.

"Well done to Ranieri. He identified Lampard at West Ham. At the beginning we didn't understand really because he didn't train very well. He's smart, you know, to minimise his effort at the training, but at the matches, wow, what a smart midfielder! And as for John, we knew that he was a leader, naturally. From the beginning, I saw him: young, fresh, English… ready, coming to train with short sleeves and shorts when it was minus four, minus five!

"But I want to say that we are proud to have built the foundation. I say it again, the winning mentality of Chelsea started from us with a bit of luck of having [Roman] Abramovich coming into the system after Ken Bates decided to sell the club.

"That Liverpool match… I know you want to talk about it."

He's not wrong. Who wouldn't want to talk to Marcel Desailly about the final game of the 2002/03 campaign, when we met Liverpool knowing that a win or a draw would see us return to the Champions League, while defeat would allow our opponents to take the final spot in that

"

WE'RE PROUD THAT WE STARTED TO BRING SOMETHING DIFFERENT, BUILDING A WINNING MENTALITY THROUGH POSSESSION

Premier League

This season we're going up from 128 to

215

Premier League matches

sky sports

“I WAS VERY PROUD TO BE THE CAPTAIN OF CHELSEA, I TELL YOU. WOW, WOW, WOW!

competition? More than that, there was much talk of the club’s dire financial situation ahead of that game, and the need to qualify for the biggest European competition to bag the prize money that would help to sustain our status as a top club.

“Yes, yes, yes, financially it was not that good,” says Desailly, “They were about to… yeah, it was difficult. Difficult. So yeah, I could feel it was unique. Okay, it was also unique to play matches against Milan, against Barcelona, in the Champions League, but that particular Liverpool Premier League match was really under tension.”

We fell behind early that day, but Desailly – wearing the captain’s armband – dragged us back into the game with a headed equaliser, shortly before Jesper Gronkjaer scored what turned out to be the winner in a dramatic first half. I ask how it felt to score that crucial goal in our history.

“Responsibility as a captain, you know?” he says. “We were 1-0 down. I can’t really explain why I was there – the corner was not being played and there was no reason for me to be there!

“Responsibility. Let me try something, let me go forward and show my team-mates what I’m capable of, and of course it helped that, after, Gronkjaer did his own one!

“Yeah, we were very pleased, very pleased. When you see the evolution of Chelsea over the years afterwards… I had to leave [a year later] because I was 35, or something like that. I couldn’t stay. I still had one more year left, and I went and experienced the Middle East vibe of football, but with an eye on Chelsea… and in fact, they won the league. The year I left, they won the league!”

Desailly did win the FA Cup in 2000 – the last final at the original Wembley – but it doesn’t seem fair that, after captaining that squad to the verge of greatness, he missed out on the club’s first league title in 50 years.

“Yeah, it’s not fair,” he agrees. “It happened with Milan also, but that was different because I had won it already with them. With Chelsea it was a mix of happiness and pain.”

Regardless, his legendary status is secure at Stamford Bridge, where he is one of the iconic players celebrated with a permanent display on the original Shed Wall. On the list of Chelsea captains, his name sits comfortably between Dennis Wise and John Terry, and he brought his own way of doing things to the role.

“It was a long time Dennis was our captain, and he was an historic player, with a pitbull mentality, so we were following him, we were ready to die for him,” says Desailly. “I was a captain in a different way, trying to be available for everyone through my experience of the highest level. I was very proud to hold the captaincy at Chelsea, I tell you. Wow, wow, wow.

“I wanted something different, and I’m very pleased that I made the move [to Chelsea]. Even though I was playing at Milan, it was really a good move for me football-wise, lifestyle-wise. It was important for my kids to be able to experience it. Even now, my kids thank me that they’ve made connections at the French school, to be expatriated in so dynamic a country as England. And to be part of raising the level of what is now the Premier League was something great – yes, yes.”

Below, celebrating his famous goal against Liverpool in 2003 and, below right, coming up against Dion Dublin in the 2000 FA Cup final, the last to be held at the old Wembley

THROUGH THE SUN AND RAIN

Mark Smith

Chelsea Amputee footballer and lifelong supporter

I live in Milton Keynes now, but I was born in Perivale, down in Ealing, and my old man was Chelsea. So obviously you follow in your dad's footsteps.

He did a lot of night shifts, and worked away, so I didn't get to go to my first game at Stamford Bridge until I was about 15. It was John Terry's debut, in the FA Cup against Gillingham, and we were in the West Stand when it was half built.

It's every fan's dream to play for Chelsea as well, but when you get to an age and you realise you're not going to be a professional footballer, the next thing for me was to join the military. I'd always wanted to be active and I loved my career. I went all over the world and did ceremonial duties in London, at Buckingham Palace. My career was going well.

I was in the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards for over 10 years, and I came back from operational tours in Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan without a scratch on me. Then, in 2011, I went to Canada to train other regiments to go out to Afghanistan, and during a live firing training exercise there was an incident where seven gunshots came through a wall from a light machine gun and hit me. Six went through my right glute, came out of my groin and hit my femoral artery on the way, and one hit my right shoulder.

With an arterial bleed, you've got a matter of minutes, so I was very fortunate I was working with some really experienced lads that day who were quick to treat me and saved my life. I flatlined for just over five minutes – I was gone – and the regiment flew my wife out to Canada to turn off my life support.

In the end, I was flown back to the UK to a military ward in Birmingham where I spent nine weeks and had another 27 operations.

Two things upset me when I was in hospital. The first was that my career in the military was done, but my eldest was only five months old and I was thinking about playing football with my children. I was still young enough, I was still playing for my regiment, and I was thinking I was never going to play football again. I found that harder to deal with than looking down in a hospital bed and missing a leg.

I started to read online about amputee football and at first it was still fresh enough in my head what it was like to play football as an able-bodied player, so I found it really difficult. You have to put a lot of trust in crutches to not give way and when you're learning you end up on your backside a lot. It's all technique and a lot of demands on your upper body, but I got more and more used to it and I eventually became player-manager at Peterborough United, where we won the league.

After lockdown, I decided to email Chelsea on the off-chance they might want to start amputee football, and we were actually in a cab on our way to Stamford Bridge for Chelsea-Liverpool when my phone rang. It was a bloke at the Chelsea Foundation and he said, "We're really interested."

The club have gone above and beyond in everything they've done for us ever since. I drive into Cobham with a massive smile on my face every single time. Chelsea are now the benchmark in how they raise awareness for amputee football – they've made us feel really valued.

Over the last two years, I had come away from playing because I completed my UEFA-C coaching licence and an opportunity came up to coach in the Centre of Excellence at MK Dons. But I always missed playing, and then Chelsea contacted me ahead of the FA Disability Cup final this summer and told me the England squad would be away in Poland on the date of that game, so both Chelsea and Everton would be short of players for the final. With it being live on TNT Sports, it couldn't be moved, so I went down to Cobham for a training session and it was exactly what I'd missed. Having played a part in setting the team up at Chelsea, I thought how nice it would be to be there when we won our first trophy.

I spoke to the team before the game, saying, "How many people would love to pull on a Chelsea shirt for an FA Cup final of any kind on television? You are living so many people's dreams."

After we won the final 2-0, I was there in a Chelsea shirt, walking up to get my winner's medal with a lump in my throat. In that moment I thought, in the weirdest way possible, this was worth losing a leg for.

I think that's the same feeling for so many of the players, who have had things like bone cancer, been in motorbike accidents, or are ex-military like me. For all of us, it's turned a negative into a massive positive.

> “I WALKED UP TO GET MY WINNER'S MEDAL WITH A LUMP IN MY THROAT

BLUE AND WHITE ARMY

Send your messages to **cfc.programme@reachsport.com**

Happy birthday to season ticket holder **Tom Rice**, who turned 40 last week. Lots of love from your family, especially your six children (Hazel, Jacob, Rosie, Arlo, Libby and Dolly).

CHELSEA FOOTBALL CLUB
BARCLAYS

Congratulations, **Chester** and **Hannah** – their first Chelsea game as Mr and Mrs. They met at Kingsmeadow and today will be Chester's 750th Chelsea men's game.

Happy 11th Birthday, **Will** – enjoy the game today! Lots of love, Mummy.

Happy sixth birthday to our amazing **Mini Palmer**! Biggest Chelsea fan ever, brave through tough times. We can't wait to celebrate at the Bridge with you!

OBITUARIES

Pete Smith (1961 – 2025). Lifelong Chelsea fan. Our dear friend, taken far too soon. You will be truly missed. Andy, Chris and Glen.

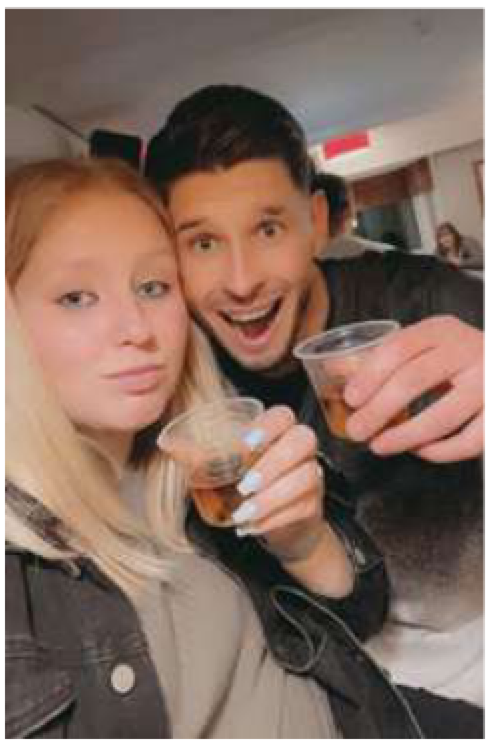
Remembering **John Caton** and **Robin Sainty** – lifelong friends and devoted Chelsea supporters. Sadly missed, forever loved, always with us in spirit at Stamford Bridge.

Matthew Cole. A cherished son, brother, and uncle too; hardworking, kind, and loyal through. You cheered for Chelsea, proud and true; our hearts now cheer in memory of you.

Forever in blue, your heart beat Chelsea. Loyal, proud, loving – our hero. Always remembered, never forgotten. In loving memory of **Michael Paul Warren**.

John McGlynn is bringing his son **Tiernan** over from Listowel, County Kerry, Ireland, for his first game.

Happy 70th birthday, Dad (**Neil Selwood**). From Jonathan, Rachel and Mum.



Happy 24th birthday to **Courtney O'Brien**. I hope you enjoy your day out in London. Love you loads, from Craigy.

Happy 18th birthday, **Callum**. Love from Mum, Dad and all the family.

Just before the Club World Cup final, young fan **Kaisen** met his favourite Chelsea players in New York – a moment he'll never forget.

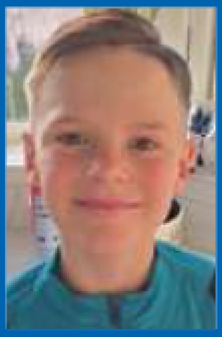
Will Will Barber, the light of our lives – happy ninth birthday buddy! Love, Mummy, Daddy and Ben.

Cosmo's baby sister **Posie**, born 22 April, will one day join Grandad Mark and Uncle Ben at the Bridge to see the world champions.

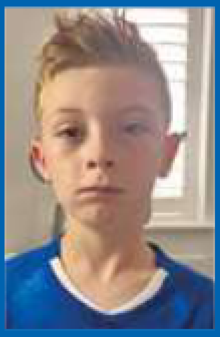
Patrick Daly has had a season ticket since the late 1970s. He's been to seven finals with his son, **Patrick**, and best friend, **Don**, and Chelsea have won them all!

A huge welcome to **Nick** and **Jasper**, attending his first game at Stamford Bridge! Up the Chels!

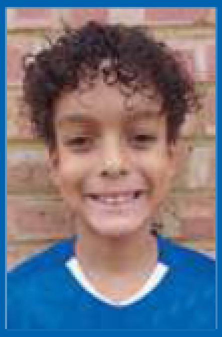
TODAY'S MASCOTS



ARIS

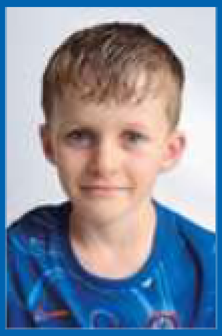


VINCENZO

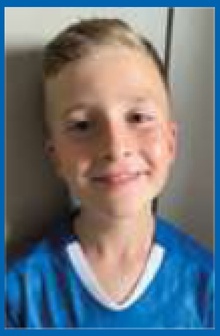


CASEY

RAFAEL



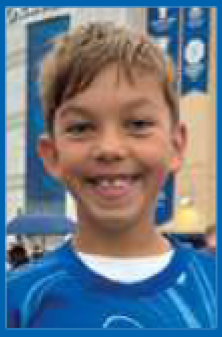
FRANKIE



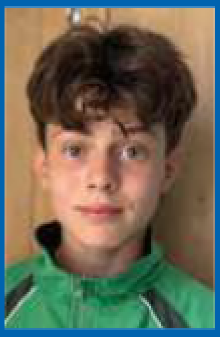
LIAM

FREDDIE

LIAM



HENRY



JONNY

JAXSON

WOMEN

SONIA BOMPASTOR

HEAD COACH

Welcome back to Stamford Bridge for the start of a new season, which I hope will be just as successful for the club as the last one after a lot of silverware was lifted.

We had the chance to celebrate the achievements of last season at a special event for the fans earlier in the month, when both teams came together and all the trophies were on display for you to see. It was a really special evening that I enjoyed a lot.

We'd just come back to start our pre-season, so it was a nice reminder of everything that we achieved at a time when the hard work for the new season really begins! I look back at the three trophies we won and still find it difficult to believe that the season we had was possible.

English football, and the WSL in particular, is so competitive and even though I knew all about Chelsea's many trophies before I arrived, to be able to achieve the Treble in our first year together makes me so proud of the players. Now we are going for all four trophies this season – that is always the objective.

There was also success for some of our players at the European Championship in Switzerland, with England winning the trophy for the second time in a row. Congratulations to our six Lionesses – Hannah Hampton, Lucy Bronze, Niamh Charles, Keira Walsh, Lauren James and Aggie Beever-Jones – for a brilliant tournament and, of course, to Sarina Wiegman, who has now won the Euros three times in a row with two different countries.

In total, we had 15 players taking part in the competition, which is a sign of how strong our squad is. It was also the highest-attended Euros in history, beating the record set

WINNERS
UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2025
ENGLAND

at the last tournament here in England. This is another big positive for women's football, which continues to grow every year, and I hope we continue to see lots of big crowds in the WSL.

We're all looking forward to being back at Stamford Bridge for our first league game of the season, when we take on Manchester City at the beginning of September. Obviously it is a really tough start for both teams, as there is such a big rivalry between the clubs and we will be competing against each other to win trophies. But we embrace every challenge we are presented with and I think the biggest feeling for all of us about this game is excitement, especially as we are playing at home in front of our supporters.

The weekend before that we play a pre-season match against AC Milan at Kingsmeadow, which will be an important 90 minutes for us to see all of our hard work on the training ground being tested by a strong European opponent.

Those of you coming to that game will have the chance to see some of our new signings for the first time, and we're really happy with the additions that we've made to the squad so far this summer. I'll talk a bit more about our new signings in my column for the Fulham game.

It's a different pre-season for us compared to last year due to the Euros, with players coming back at different times depending on when they finished the competition, but everyone is returning with the same mentality and desire to build on what we achieved last season.

As I said at the start of this column, we're all very proud of what we have done together so far, but the mentality at this football club – which we are all aligned with – is always to look ahead to the next challenge, the next trophy, and how we can be better than last time.

That takes a lot of hard work, focus and dedication, but we are all ready for this. Most of all, we are excited to get started again and I honestly cannot wait to be back here next month when we play Man City.

WOMEN 2025/26

Date	Opposition		Res
AUGUST			
Sun 17	Ajax *(1pm)*	A	-
Sat 30	AC Milan *(1pm)*	H1	-
SEPTEMBER			
Fri 5	Manchester City *(7.30pm, Sky)*	H2	-
Sun 14	Aston Villa *(12noon, Sky)*	A	-
Sun 21	Leicester City *(12noon, Sky)*	H1	-
Sun 28	West Ham United *(2.30pm, BBC)*	A	-
OCTOBER			
Sat 4	Manchester United	A	-
7/8	UWCL MD1	-	-
Sat 11	Tottenham Hotspur	H1	-
15/16	UWCL MD2	-	-
NOVEMBER			
Sun 2	London City Lionesses	H2	-
Sat 8	Arsenal	A	-
11/12	UWCL MD3	-	-
Sun 16	Liverpool	A	-
19/20	UWCL MD4	-	-
DECEMBER			
Sat 6	Everton	H1	-
9/10	UWCL MD5	-	-
Sun 14	Brighton & Hove Albion	A	-
Wed 17	UWCL MD6	-	-
Sun 21	WLC QF	-	-
JANUARY			
Sun 11	West Ham United	H1	-
Sun 18	WFAC 4	-	-
Sun 25	Arsenal	H2	-
FEBRUARY			
Sun 1	Manchester City	A	-
Sun 8	Tottenham Hotspur	A	-
Sun 15	Liverpool	H1	-
MARCH			
Sun 15	Brighton & Hove Albion	H1	-
Sun 22	London City Lionesses	A	-
Sun 29	Aston Villa	H1	-
APRIL			
Sun 26	Everton	A	-
MAY			
Sun 3	Leicester City	A	-
15/16/17	Manchester United	H2	-

All games kick off at 2pm unless stated
H1 - Kingsmeadow Stadium. H2 – Stamford Bridge
UWCL – UEFA Women's Champions League
WFAC – Women's FA Cup
WLC – Women's League Cup

U21s

CALUM McFARLANE

HEAD COACH

These are my first notes since becoming Under-21s head coach here, and I'm really excited to take this role on. Having been in academy football for a long time, I know Chelsea pretty much set the standard for most areas in youth development. This academy has had loads of success and lots of players coming through to first-team football, so it's exciting to now be a part of it.

Regarding my own background, I've been at a few clubs since I started coaching. I was at Crystal Palace and Fulham initially, then I went to Manchester City for three years, and my last club was Southampton, where I spent 18 months coaching the Under-18s and then had six months of last season with the Under-21s, where we had a pretty successful year. It was a great club to work for, I loved my time there, but I am really excited for this next step at Chelsea.

My first three weeks with the Under-21s here have been very positive. It's a really good group of lads – very honest, very hard working, and open to some new ideas in areas that we think they can improve on. There's a lot of talent in the group, a lot of players that I think the club should be really excited about.

The first-team coaching staff communicate with us every day, and there have been loads of good opportunities for the lads to go across and train with them too. Reggie Walsh and Genesis Antwi have been with the first team for the last couple of weeks and they played minutes in the pre-season games against Bayer Leverkusen and AC Milan. We have a constant dialogue and they're always really interested in how the young lads are doing, supporting their progression and giving them that platform to train with world-class players, and show that they can compete against them. It's a really positive relationship.

Our pre-season has gone well. Every training session has been super competitive, the lads have been in a good place and we had some great results as well, which always helps.

Our first pre-season game was against Preston, who we played the week before the Championship started, so

The players go through their pre-match warm-up ahead of our 2-1 win over Stoke. Harrison McMahon (opposite page top) and Kobe Barbour (opposite page bottom) in action against the Potters

they put out a really strong side, with nine senior players, including people like Robbie Brady, who's got 70-plus international caps. We played them at Deepdale and it was a really good all-around performance where we controlled the game. We won 2-1, but it probably should have been more. So it was a good start, against a very aggressive, high-level Championship club.

The second game was against Stoke City, which was a little bit of a different challenge. Where Preston were super aggressive and really on the front foot, Stoke were a little bit different in that they sat off more, in a deep block, so it was a challenge for us to try and break them down.

We were 1-0 down at half-time and then we brought on a lot of younger boys, as five or six of the Under-18s group came on in the second half, and we turned the game around, playing really well in the second half, and getting a 2-1 win.

The final pre-season game was last Sunday, against Brentford, where we delivered a pretty professional, complete performance and won 2-0. So it was a positive pre-season, with lots of good individual performances as well – a really pleasing three weeks.

Our Premier League 2 season begins tomorrow night, when we're at home to Manchester City at Kingsmeadow. It's a great way to start the season, against the team that won the league last year, and who have won four out of the last five Premier League 2 titles. So it won't get any tougher than that, but I honestly think we've got a really good group this year – a very talented squad – and we're confident about being successful in all the competitions we're in.

U21s 2025/26

Date	Opposition		Res
AUGUST			
Mon 18	Manchester City	H	-
Fri 22	Newcastle United	A	-
Tue 26	Shrewsbury Town *(FLT MD1, Sky)*	A	-
Fri 29	Aston Villa	A	-
SEPTEMBER			
16-18	UYL MD1	-	-
Sat 20	Ipswich Town *(2pm)*	H	-
Tue 23	Northampton Town *(FLT MD2, Sky)*	A	-
Sat 27	Stoke City *(2pm)*	H	-
30-1	UYL MD2	-	-
OCTOBER			
Sun 5	Burnley *(12pm)*	A	-
21/22	UYL MD3	-	-
Sat 25	Arsenal *(2pm)*	H	-
Tue 28	Walsall *(FLT MD3, Sky)*	A	-
Fri 31	Everton	A	-
NOVEMBER			
4/5	UYL MD4	-	-
Sat 8	Reading *(2pm)*	H	-
25/26	UYL MD5	-	-
DECEMBER			
9/10	UYL MD6	-	-
JANUARY			
Sat 10	Crystal Palace *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 16	West Ham United	A	-
Mon 25	Leicester City	A	-
Sat 31	Southampton *(2pm)*	H	-
FEBRUARY			
Sat 7	Blackburn Rovers *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 13	Birmingham City	A	-
Sat 21	Leeds United *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 27	Manchester United	A	-
MARCH			
Sat 14	Sunderland *(2pm)*	H	-
Fri 20	Wolverhampton Wanderers	A	-
APRIL			
Fri 10	Fulham	A	-

All games kick off at 7pm unless stated
FLT - Football League Trophy
UYL - U19s UEFA Youth League
H - Kingsmeadow Stadium

U18s

MEET THE NEW SCHOLARS!

Introducing our new intake of Academy scholars for the 2025/26 season

CHRIS ATHERTON
Chris joins Chelsea for the 2025/26 season from Glenavon in Northern Ireland. A quick and clever winger, he made headlines as the youngest-ever senior debutant in UK football history at just 13 and regularly featured at senior level for Glenavon last season. He has also represented Northern Ireland Under-17s.

TOBY BELL
Toby joined us from Sunderland at Under-15s, quickly establishing himself as a confident presence in goal. He played a crucial role as we won the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit Cup and National Final and stepped up to make his Under-18s debut last season against Millwall in the Premier League Cup.

JEREMIAH BERKELEY-AGYEPONG
A dynamic winger who joined Chelsea at Under-8s and has stood out throughout his time in the Academy. Quick, creative and brave in one-on-one situations, Jeremiah played a key role in winning the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit Cup and impressed when he featured for the Under-18s during pre-season last summer.

FREDDY BERNAL
Signing at Under-8s, Freddy has progressed steadily ever since, showing maturity and consistency. A calm, reliable goalkeeper, he featured in the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit National Final against Leeds United. Last season, he stepped up to play for the Under-17s and Under-18s, earning regular invitations to England youth camps.

CALVIN DIAKITE
Calvin arrived here as an Under-11 and has developed into a commanding and disciplined defender. Known for his vocal presence, physicality and maturity, he was part of the Under-16s leadership group and featured regularly for the Under-18s last season. He has also been part of the England youth setup.

MATHIS EBOUE
Mathis joined us in January 2025 from Watford, where he made his Under-21s debut while still an Under-16. A versatile and creative forward, he can operate across the front line and excels during attacking transitions. He made an immediate impact here and earned a place in the England youth set-up.

CHIZARAM EZENWATA
Chizzy joined Chelsea from Charlton Athletic as an Under-15 and quickly impressed with his sharp footwork and clinical finishing. A regular starter for the Under-18s last season, he finished as the team's top scorer and also made his Under-21s debut against Manchester City. His performances have earned him frequent England call-ups.

JACOB HALL
Jacob joined Chelsea at Under-9s and has developed into a smart, composed centre-back. Praised for his reading of the game and ability to win duels, he is also a leader. Last season, as an Under-16, he stepped up to the Under-18s, gaining valuable experience as he transitions into full-time football.

MENDES DA SILVA
5
NUMA-McQUEEN
11
KABBAJ
7
ATHERTON
11
HOLLAND
8
VIDAL-PHILBERT
7
WHITE
3
BELL
1
BERNAL
1
EZENWATA
9
DIAKITE
4
RICHARDS
2
BERKELEY-AGYEPONG
5
WALSH
10
HALL
3
EBOUE
10

CHARLIE HOLLAND

Since joining Chelsea at Under-8s, Charlie has consistently demonstrated leadership at the heart of the team. A strong holding midfielder, he combines defensive responsibility with attacking drive, showcasing his maturity and tactical intelligence. He appeared several times for the Under-18s last season and also represents England.

RYAN KAVUMA-McQUEEN

Having been at the club since Under-8s, Ryan has developed into an energetic, clinical winger. He played a key role in winning the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit Cup and became a regular for the Under-18s last season, as well as featuring – and scoring – for our Under-21s, and impressing for England.

JOEL PHILBERT

A direct and skilful winger, Joel joined Chelsea from West Ham at Under-15s and excels in one-on-one situations on the flanks. Last season, he also featured for the Under-18s, scoring in a league fixture against Brighton, and has also had opportunities with the England international set-up.

IBRAHIM RABBAJ

A creative attacking midfielder, Ibrahim joined Chelsea from Crystal Palace at Under-12s. Known for his flair and instinctive play, he was a key figure for the Under-16s last season and also scored for the Under-18s. He was part of the Morocco squad that won the Under-17 Africa Cup of Nations.

LEWI RICHARDS

Lewi has been with the club since Under-8s and is a whole-hearted and gritty performer, whether in midfield or at centre-back. He was part of the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit Cup-winning side and featured regularly for the Under-18s last season, while he has also represented England at youth level.

ISAGO SILVA

Isago joined Chelsea at Under-13s and has grown into a tactically intelligent and versatile defender. Capable of playing at left-back and centre-back, he was key to the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit Cup success. Last season, he also made his Under-18s debut against Leicester City and showed intelligence and composure throughout.

DANTE WAITE

Coming through Chelsea's development centre in his Under-8s year, Dante has developed into a composed, dependable defender. He played a key role in the Under-15 Premier League Floodlit Cup win and was part of the Under-16s leadership group. Last season, he featured consistently for the Under-18s, showcasing maturity and leadership.

REGGIE WALSH

Reggie joined Chelsea at Under-8s level and has developed into a dynamic midfielder. He stepped up to the Under-18s last season and also appeared for the Under-21s, before being named in the first-team squad for the UEFA Conference League match against Legia Warsaw. He made his senior debut off the bench in the following round against Djurgarden, before starting the second leg. Reggie also represents England.

Congratulations to all our new scholars!

U18s 2025/26

Date	Opposition		Res
AUGUST			
Sat 23	Crystal Palace	A	-
Wed 27	U18 PLC MD1	-	-
Sat 30	Aston Villa *(12pm)*	H	-
SEPTEMBER			
Sat 13	Arsenal	A	-
Tue 16	U17 PLC MD1	-	-
Sat 20	Brighton & Hove Albion	H	-
Sat 27	West Bromwich Albion *(12pm)*	A	-
Tue 30	U17 PLC MD2	-	-
OCTOBER			
Sat 4	U18 PLC MD2	-	-
Sat 18	Tottenham Hotspur	H	-
Tue 21	U17 PLC MD3	-	-
Sat 25	Reading	A	-
NOVEMBER			
Sat 1	Southampton	A	-
Sat 8	Norwich City	H	-
Sat 22	U18 PLC MD3	-	-
Sat 29	West Ham United	A	-
DECEMBER			
Sat 6	Fulham	H	-
Sat 6	FAYC 3	-	-
Sat 13	Ipswich Town *(12pm)*	A	-
JANUARY			
Sat 10	Birmingham City *(12pm)*	H	-
Sat 17	Leicester City *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 24	Crystal Palace	H	-
Sat 31	Norwich City	A	-
FEBRUARY			
Sat 7	Arsenal	H	-
Sat 14	Aston Villa *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 21	Southampton	H	-
MARCH			
Sat 7	West Bromwich Albion *(12pm)*	H	-
Sat 14	Brighton & Hove Albion	A	-
Tue 17	Tottenham Hotspur	A	-
Sat 21	Reading	H	-
APRIL			
Sat 11	West Ham United	H	-
Sat 18	Fulham	A	-
Sat 25	Ipswich Town *(12pm)*	H	-
MAY			
Sat 2	Birmingham City *(12pm)*	A	-
Sat 9	Leicester City *(12pm)*	H	-

All games kick off at 11am unless stated
U18 PLC - U18s Premier League Cup
U17 PLC - U17s Premier League Cup
FAYC - FA Youth Cup
H - Cobham Training Ground

NUMBERS GAME

WORDS • PAUL DUTTON

This weekend is the start of the 34th Premier League season, with the Blues one of six ever-presents in the top flight since it was rebranded in 1992. Including today's match, our opening Premier League fixture of the season has been at Stamford Bridge 21 times.

LAST FIVE PL HOME OPENERS

Season	Opponent	Result	CFC Scorers
2016/17	West Ham United	W 2-1	Hazard (pen), Diego Costa
2017/18	Burnley	L 2-3	Morata, David Luiz
2021/22	Crystal Palace	W 3-0	Alonso, Pulisic, Chalobah
2023/24	Liverpool	D 1-1	Disasi
2024/25	Manchester City	L 0-2	

Diego Costa vs West Ham (2016)

Trevoh Chalobah vs Crystal Palace (2021)

In our 120-year history, this is only the 15th time (and seventh at home) that we've opened a league season with a London derby: against West Ham United (four), Spurs (three), Arsenal (two), Crystal Palace (two), Wimbledon (two), Orient and Charlton Athletic (one each). We've won all four of our previous opening-weekend derbies in the Premier League.

We're also starting with four consecutive games against teams from the capital for the first time. Prior to this season, our longest sequence of London derbies at the start of a season is one! Here's how we got on against our local rivals last season.

2024/25 PL LONDON DERBY TABLE

	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Arsenal	12	7	4	1	24	12	+12	25
Chelsea	**12**	**6**	**4**	**3**	**18**	**12**	**+6**	**22**
Fulham	12	5	3	4	18	16	+2	18
Crystal Palace	12	4	3	5	14	17	-3	15
Brentford	12	3	3	6	13	19	-6	12
West Ham	12	3	3	6	13	22	-9	12
Spurs	12	3	2	7	15	17	-2	11

Chelsea will begin the 2025/26 season only 35 days after our Club World Cup victory in New Jersey, marking our shortest-ever break between seasons, two days fewer than the gap between the Covid-affected 2019/20 and 2020/21 campaigns.

Only Manchester United (22) have won more times in their opening Premier League fixture than the Blues (20).

Before the opening weekend, Chelsea and Aston Villa each had 27 players who scored on their Premier League debut, the most of any club.

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EDGE

John Terry has made the most appearances for Chelsea on matchday one of a Premier League season with 14, followed by Frank Lampard (13), Cesar Azpilicueta and Petr Cech (nine each). Lampard has also scored the joint-most goals (six, level with Didier Drogba) while Dennis Wise has the most opening-day assists for us with four.

We lost our opening league game last season but we haven't been beaten on matchday one of consecutive Premier League campaigns since 1997/98 and 1998/99, both of which were against Coventry City.

The 1-1 draw in the corresponding fixture against Crystal Palace last September ended our run of 13 consecutive Premier League wins over them and was the first draw between us since 1995, ending a 26-game sequence in the league without the two sides finishing level.

Palace last came away from Stamford Bridge with all three points in April 2017, when they won 2-1. They have also conceded at least once in each of their last 22 Premier League games against us, a run that stretches back to 2014.

Our last home defeat in the top flight was against Fulham on Boxing Day last year. We've won eight and drawn two of our 10 games since then. We've also scored in 31 of our last 32 home league matches, only drawing a blank against Manchester City on the opening weekend last term.

We have won nine of our last 10 matches across all competitions and are aiming for a sixth consecutive win since losing to Flamengo at the Club World Cup.

Filip Jorgensen

We had 22 debutants in 2024/25, one more than the previous campaign, which is a club record (excluding our first-ever season, when all 29 players who appeared for us were obviously debutants).

During the June international break, Trevoh Chalobah became the eighth Chelsea player to make his England debut since 2019, more than any other club in this period. Trevoh and Nathaniel became the 21st set of brothers (and first to have both played for Chelsea) to have appeared for the England men's senior team, although Nathaniel was with Watford when he won his only cap.

Chalobah also made his 100th appearance for Chelsea during the Club World Cup, and Pedro Neto appeared in his 50th game as a Blue when he started the final.

Nicolas Jackson is serving the third and last match of his Premier League suspension following a red card received at Newcastle United in May.

We're back in the Champions League this season and the draw for the league phase of the competition is scheduled for Thursday 28 August at 5pm.

The capacity at Stamford Bridge this season has increased from 40,022 to 40,444.

BALLON D'OR NOMINEES

Men's Ballon d'Or – Cole Palmer

Kopa Trophy (best men's U21s player) – Estevao

Men's Johan Cruyff Trophy (best coach) – Enzo Maresca

Men's Club of the Season – Chelsea

Women's Ballon d'Or – Sandy Baltimore, Lucy Bronze, Hannah Hampton, Johanna Rytting Kaneryd

Women's Club of the Season – Chelsea

Women's Johan Cruyff Trophy (best coach) – Sonia Bompastor

Women's Young Player – Wieke Kaptein

Best Women's Goalkeeper – Hannah Hampton

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25/26 HOME KIT
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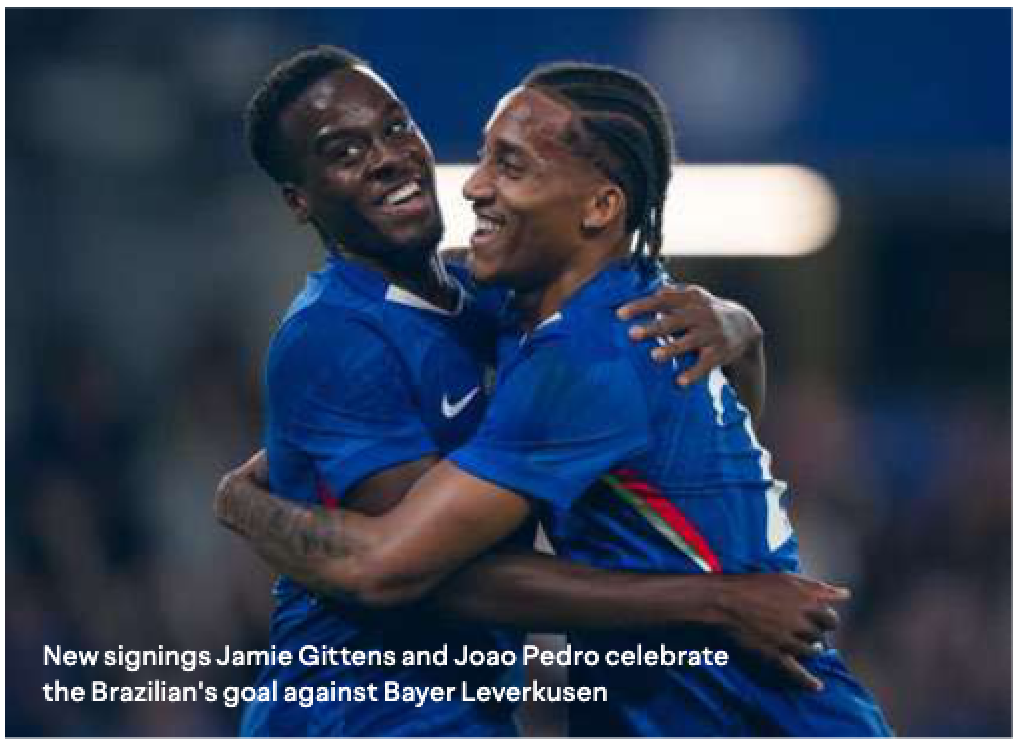
SUMMER TRANSFERS

The Premier League transfer window closes at 7pm on Monday 1 September and here is a reminder of the deals completed by the Blues so far this summer at the time of going to print

INS	
Dario Essugo	Sporting CP
Liam Delap	Ipswich Town
Mamadou Sarr	Strasbourg
Mike Penders	KRC Genk
Joao Pedro	Brighton & Hove Albion
Kendry Paez	Independiente del Valle
Kian Best	Preston North End
Jamie Gittens	Borussia Dortmund
Estevao	Palmeiras
Jorrel Hato	Ajax
OUTS	
Dylan Williams	Burton Albion
Bashir Humphreys	Burnley
Marcus Bettinelli	Manchester City
Lucas Bergstrom	Released (now Real Mallorca)
Eddie Beach	Released (now Kilmarnock)
Luke Campbell	Released (now Nottingham Forest)
Marcell Washington	Released (now Arsenal)
Harry Rodda	Released (now Southampton)
Kepa Arrizabalaga	Arsenal
Mathis Amougou	Strasbourg
Zak Sturge	Millwall
Djordje Petrovic	Bournemouth
Noni Madueke	Arsenal
Joao Felix	Al-Nassr
Ishe Samuels-Smith	Strasbourg
Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall	Everton
Lesley Ugochukwu	Burnley
Armando Broja	Burnley
LOANS (season long)	
Deivid Washington	Santos
Teddy Sharman-Lowe	Bolton Wanderers
Caleb Wiley	Watford
Mike Penders	Strasbourg
Kendry Paez	Strasbourg
Leo Castledine	Huddersfield
Mamadou Sarr	Strasbourg
Marc Guiu	Sunderland


New signings Jamie Gittens and Joao Pedro celebrate the Brazilian's goal against Bayer Leverkusen

Chelsea Women have also been active in the transfer market ahead of the WSL summer window closing on Thursday 4 September, which is the day before the Blues begin our title defence against Manchester City here at Stamford Bridge.

INS	
Mara Alber	Hoffenheim
Ellie Carpenter	OL Lyonnes
Livia Peng	Werder Bremen
Becky Spencer	Tottenham Hotspur
OUTS	
Aimee Claypole	Nottingham Forest
Mia Fishel	Seattle Reign
Greta Humphries	Released
Sophie Ingle	Released (now Bristol City)
Ashley Lawrence	OL Lyonnes
Maelys Mpome	Brighton
Zecira Musovic	Released
Aniek Nouwen	PSV
Lucy Watson	Released
LOANS (season long)	
Lola Brown	Crystal Palace
Katie Cox	Aberdeen
Vera Jones	Bristol City

FIXTURES & RESULTS

Date	Opposition		KO/Res
AUGUST			
Sun 17	Crystal Palace *(Sky)*	H	2pm
Fri 22	West Ham United *(Sky)*	A	8pm
Sat 30	Fulham *(TNT)*	H	12.30pm
SEPTEMBER			
Sat 13	Brentford *(Sky)*	A	8pm
16/17/18	UCL MD1	-	-
Sat 20	Manchester United *(Sky)*	A	5.30pm
Wed 24	CC 3	-	-
Sat 27	Brighton & Hove Albion	H	3pm
30/31/1	UCL MD2	-	-
OCTOBER			
Sat 4	Liverpool	H	3pm
Sat 18	Nottingham Forest	A	3pm
21/22	UCL MD3	-	-
Sat 25	Sunderland	H	3pm
Wed 29	CC 4	-	-
NOVEMBER			
Sat 1	Tottenham Hotspur	A	3pm
4/5	UCL MD4	-	-
Sat 8	Wolverhampton Wanderers	H	3pm
Sat 22	Burnley	A	3pm
25/26	UCL MD5	-	-
Sat 29	Arsenal	H	3pm
DECEMBER			
Wed 3	Leeds United	A	-
Sat 6	Bournemouth	A	3pm
9/10	UCL MD6	-	-
Sat 13	Everton	H	3pm
Wed 17	CC QF	-	-
Sat 20	Newcastle United	A	3pm
Sat 27	Aston Villa	H	3pm
Tue 30	Bournemouth	H	-
JANUARY			
Sat 3	Manchester City	A	3pm
Wed 7	Fulham	A	-
Sat 10	FAC 3	-	-
Wed 14	CC SF-1	-	-
Sat 17	Brentford	H	3pm
20/21	UCL MD7	-	-
Sat 24	Crystal Palace	A	3pm
Wed 28	UCL MD8	-	-
Sat 31	West Ham United	H	3pm
FEBRUARY			
Wed 1	CC SF-2	-	-
Sat 7	Wolverhampton Wanderers	A	3pm
Wed 11	Leeds United	H	-
Sat 14	FAC 4	-	-
17/18	UCL KO PO-1	-	-
Sat 21	Burnley	H	3pm
24/25	UCL KO PO-2	-	-
Sat 28	Arsenal	A	3pm
MARCH			
Wed 4	Aston Villa	A	-
Sat 7	FAC 5	-	-
10/11	UCL R16-1	-	-
Sat 14	Newcastle United	H	3pm
17/18	UCL R16-2	-	-
Sat 21	Everton	A	3pm
Sun 22	CC final	W	-
APRIL			
Sat 4	FAC QF	-	-
7/8	UCL QF-1	-	-
Sat 11	Manchester City	H	3pm
14/15	UCL QF-2	-	-
Sat 18	Manchester United	H	3pm
Sat 25	Brighton & Hove Albion	A	3pm
Sat 25	FAC SF	W	-
28/29	UCL SF-1	-	-
MAY			
Sat 2	Nottingham Forest	H	3pm
5/6	UCL SF-2	-	-
Sat 9	Liverpool	A	3pm
Sat 16	FAC final	W	-
Sun 17	Tottenham Hotspur	H	-
Sun 24	Sunderland	A	4pm
Sat 30	UCL final	PA	-

Fixtures correct at time of going to press and are subject to change. Chelsea score shown first.
W - Wembley Stadium. PA - Puskas Arena, Budapest, Hungary. UCL - UEFA Champion's League. CC - Carabao Cup. FAC - FA Cup.

VisitMalta Weekender at Stamford Bridge

08.08.25, 7pm

Chelsea 2
Estevao 18, Joao Pedro 90

Bayer Leverkusen 0

Chelsea (4-3-3): Jorgensen; Gusto (James 64), Acheampong (Anselmino 76), Chalobah (Tosin h/t), Cucurella (Hato h/t); Santos (Rak-Sakyi 76), Caicedo (c) (Essugo h/t), Palmer (Neto h/t); Estevao (Antwi 77), Delap (Joao Pedro 64), George (Gittens 64)
Unused subs: Sanchez, Slonina, Fernandez
Booked: Chalobah 13

Attendance: 30,811

THE PRIDE OF LONDON

Goal ⚽ Penalty scored ⚽ Penalty missed ⚽ Penalty save ✚ Own goal ⚽

10.08.25, 3pm

Chelsea 4
Coubis own goal 5, Joao Pedro 8, Delap 67 pen, 90

AC Milan 1
Fofana 70

Chelsea (4-3-3): Sanchez; James (c) (Gusto 61), Tosin, Chalobah (Acheampong 56), Cucurella (Hato 73); Fernandez (Santos 60), Caicedo (Essugo 73), Palmer (Estevao 61); Neto (Walsh 73), Joao Pedro (Delap 60), Gittens (George 73)

Attendance: 37,780

The VisitMalta Weekender
Winners 2025
VisitMalta
VisitMalta

MEN'S HONOURS LIST

FOOTBALL LEAGUE/PREMIER LEAGUE
1955, 2005, 2006, 2010, 2015, 2017

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
2012, 2021

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE
2013, 2019

UEFA CONFERENCE LEAGUE
2025

EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS' CUP
1971, 1998

UEFA SUPER CUP
1998, 2021

FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP
2021, 2025

FA CUP
1970, 1997, 2000, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2018

FOOTBALL LEAGUE CUP
1965, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2015

FA CHARITY/COMMUNITY SHIELD
1955, 2000, 2005, 2009

FULL MEMBERS CUP
1986, 1990

DIVISION TWO
1984, 1989

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FOOTBALL FOUNDATION
TOGETHER FOR FOOTBALL
25

STADIUM POLICIES

PLAYING IT SAFE

The safety of all fans and visitors on a matchday is extremely important to us and there are some simple steps we can follow to ensure everybody is safe and secure at Stamford Bridge. Our stewards are here to assist you and offer information. Please remain vigilant and if you see anything you are unhappy with, we encourage you to report it to a steward or any member of staff as quickly as possible. We constantly review our security measures and while some of these are visible, others may not be so obvious, but all are aimed at ensuring that visitors remain safe. Please remember our safety procedures are in place for the benefit of all and we ask you to show patience and support.

ARRIVE EARLY

The busiest period on a matchday is the half-hour leading up to kick-off. Please arrive as early as possible to avoid the biggest crowds.

TICKET CHECKS

Ticket checks are in place upon entering the stadium site so we ask that you have them ready for inspection when you arrive. You may also be asked to show your ticket at any time you are within the Stamford Bridge grounds.

OUR BAG POLICY

We ask fans to refrain from bringing bags to matches, any bag over A4 (100 x 200 x 300 mm) in size will be denied entry. This ensures supporters are able to enter the stadium quickly and freely, as all bags and persons are subject to security searches prior to entering through the turnstiles. Please note there are no storage facilities at Stamford Bridge.

PERSISTENT STANDING

We ask that all supporters remain seated in their designated seat and do not block aisles.

SAFE STANDING (BARRIER/RAIL SEATING)

Safe standing in seated areas, it should be noted, is distinct both from persistent standing in seated areas, and from safe standing in conventional terraced standing accommodation. At Stamford Bridge in the Away Supporter Sections and the Matthew Harding Lower Tier, standing supporters are protected from the risks of forward movement by the installation of suitably designed independent barriers in front of each seat, or by the provision of suitably designed seats that incorporate barriers.

KEEP BAYS CLEAR FOR WHEELCHAIRS

During the pre-match warm-up, please do not enter bays at the front of stands marked for wheelchairs. The areas in front of the bays are emergency exit routes that should be kept clear, save for the movement of supporters in and out of the seating bowl. If you are standing pitchside, please move aside for wheelchair users to watch the warm-up.

NO SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the stadium at Stamford Bridge. The smoking of e-cigarettes or vapes is also forbidden. Any person in breach of these rules will be ejected.

CCTV

CCTV is in operation throughout the stadium for your safety and security.

MINIMUM UNACCOMPANIED SUPPORTER AGE CHANGE

Juveniles under the age of 16 will not be permitted entry unless accompanied by a person over the age of 18.

GET IN CONTACT

At Chelsea FC, we aim to deliver outstanding customer service. You can contact the club by the following methods:
Phone: 0371 811 1955 (International: +44 207 386 9373)
Email: supporter.services@chelseafc.com
Post: Supporter Services, Chelsea Football Club,
Stamford Bridge, Fulham Road, London SW6 1HS

IF YOU SEE OR EXPERIENCE ABUSE OR ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT THE STADIUM, REPORT IT.

NO TO HATE

DURING THE MATCH TEXT 88777 OR SCAN HERE

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Manager Live Challenge Content

CLUBS

1 Archetype Unlock Consumable

2 Double Archetypes XP Consumables

*Conditions & restrictions apply.
See ea.com/games/ea-sports-fc/fc-26/game-disclaimers for details.

Enzo MARESCA
Head coach

1	Robert SANCHEZ
3	Marc CUCURELLA
4	Tosin ADARABIOYO
5	Benoit BADIASHILE
6	Levi COLWILL
7	Pedro NETO
8	Enzo FERNANDEZ
9	Liam DELAP
10	Cole PALMER
11	Jamie GITTENS
12	Filip JORGENSEN
14	Dario ESSUGO
15	Nicolas JACKSON
17	Andrey SANTOS
18	Christopher NKUNKU
20	Joao PEDRO
21	Jorrel HATO
23	Trevoh CHALOBAH
24	Reece JAMES
25	Moises CAICEDO
27	Malo GUSTO
29	Wesley FOFANA
30	Aaron ANSELMINO
32	Tyrique GEORGE
34	Josh ACHEAMPONG
41	ESTEVAO
44	Gabriel SLONINA
45	Romeo LAVIA

Oliver GLASNER
Manager

1	Dean HENDERSON
2	Daniel MUNOZ
3	Tyrick MITCHELL
5	Maxence LACROIX
6	Marc GUEHI
7	Ismaila SARR
8	Jefferson LERMA
9	Eddie NKETIAH
10	Eberechi EZE
11	Matheus FRANCA
14	Jean-Philippe MATETA
17	Nathaniel CLYNE
18	Daichi KAMADA
19	Will HUGHES
20	Adam WHARTON
21	Romain ESSE
22	Odsonne EDOUARD
24	Borna SOSA
26	Chris RICHARDS
28	Cheick DOUCOURE
29	Naouirou AHAMADA
31	Remi MATTHEWS
34	Chadi RIAD
44	Walter BENITEZ
49	Jesurun RAK-SAKYI
55	Justin DEVENNY
58	Caleb KPORHA
59	Rio CARDINES

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Darren ENGLAND
(Referee)

Ian HUSSIN
(Assistant referee)

Akil HOWSON
(Assistant referee)

Michael SALISBURY
(Fourth official)

James BELL
(VAR)

Adam NUNN
(Assistant VAR)

NEXT MATCH

Friday 22 August
Premier League
West Ham United
London Stadium (8pm)

All information correct
at time of going to print

NO TO HATE

No room for racism

CHELSEA FC'S PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

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